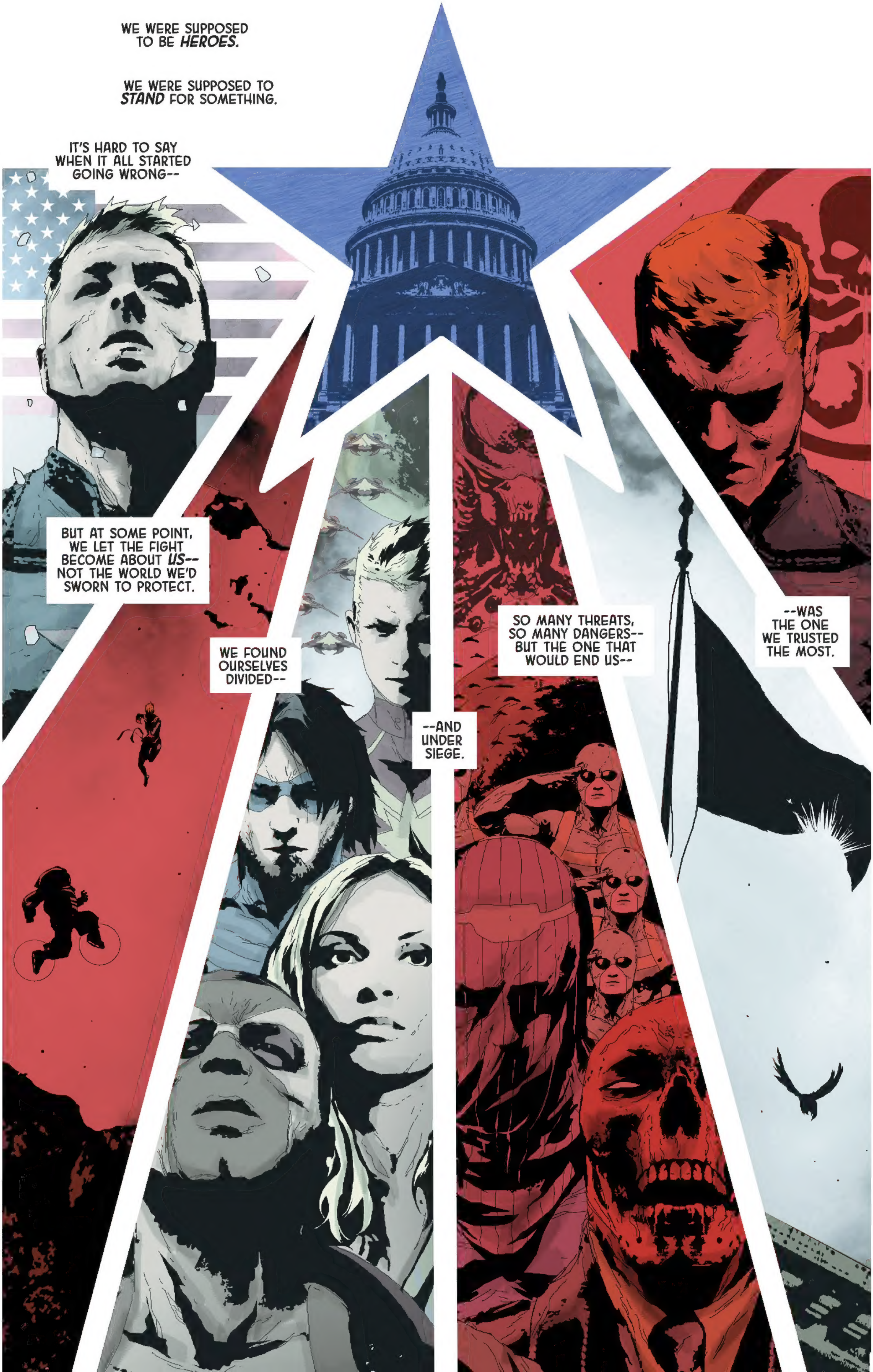
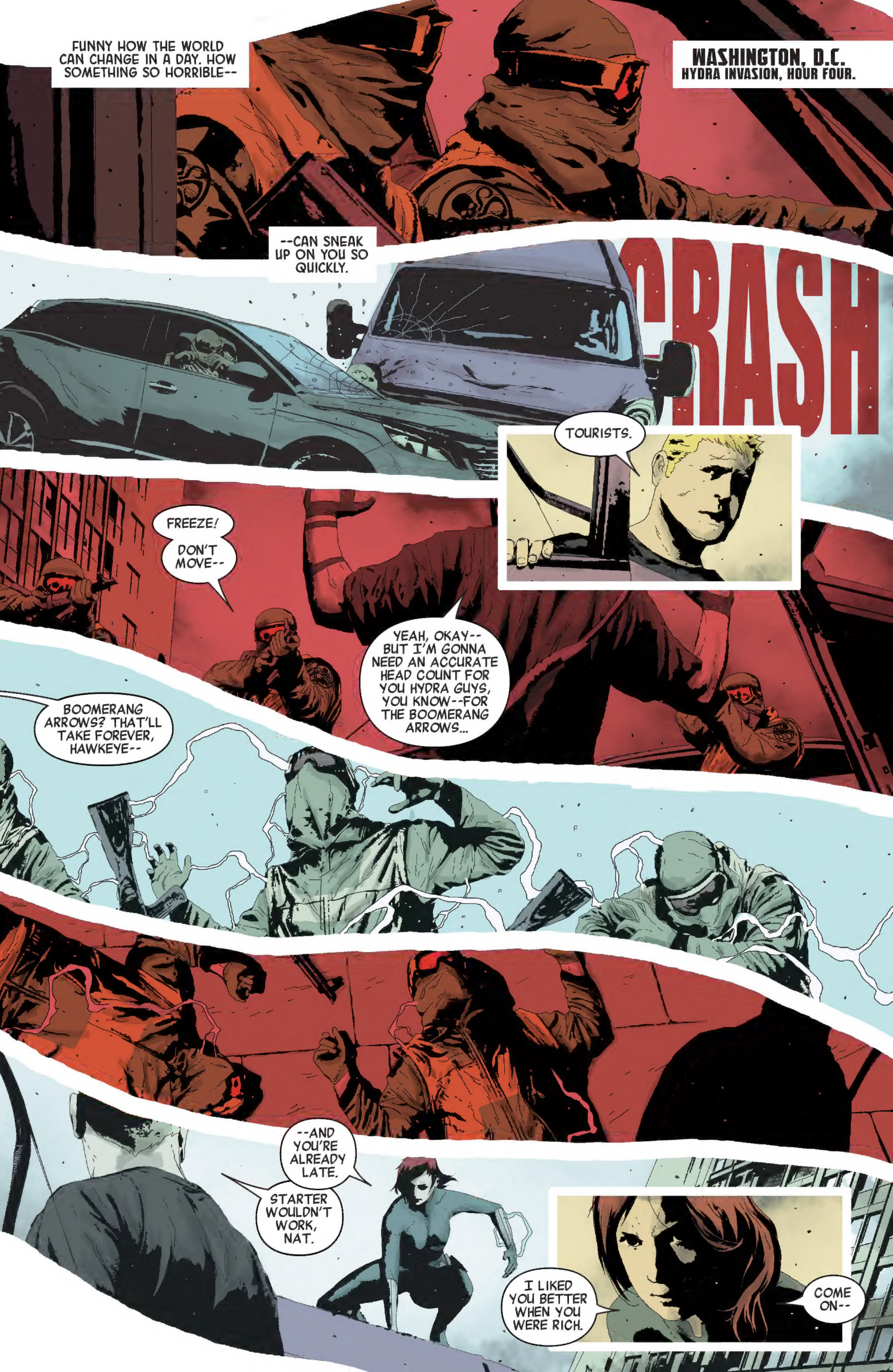
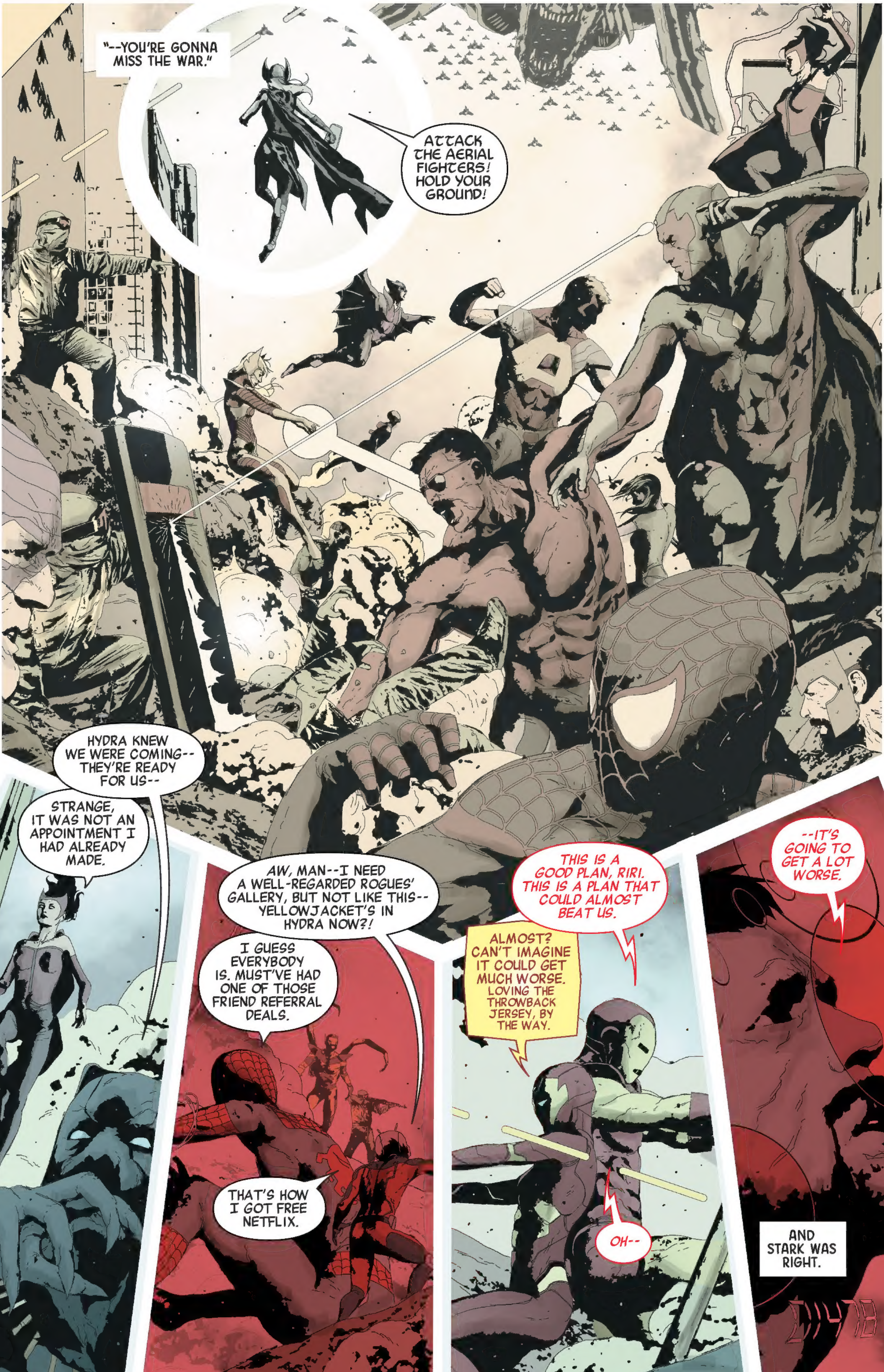
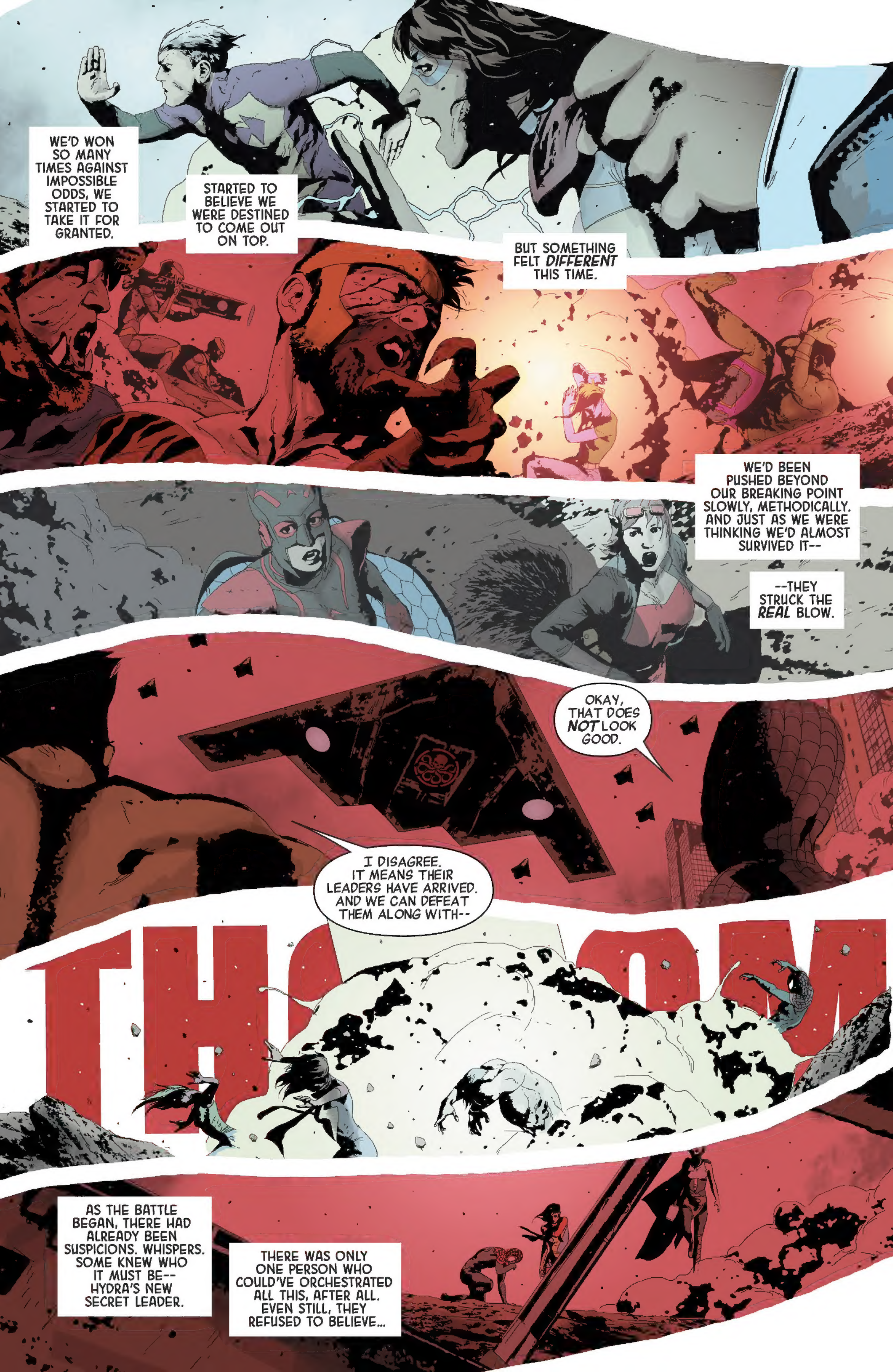
FREE COMIC BOOK DAY

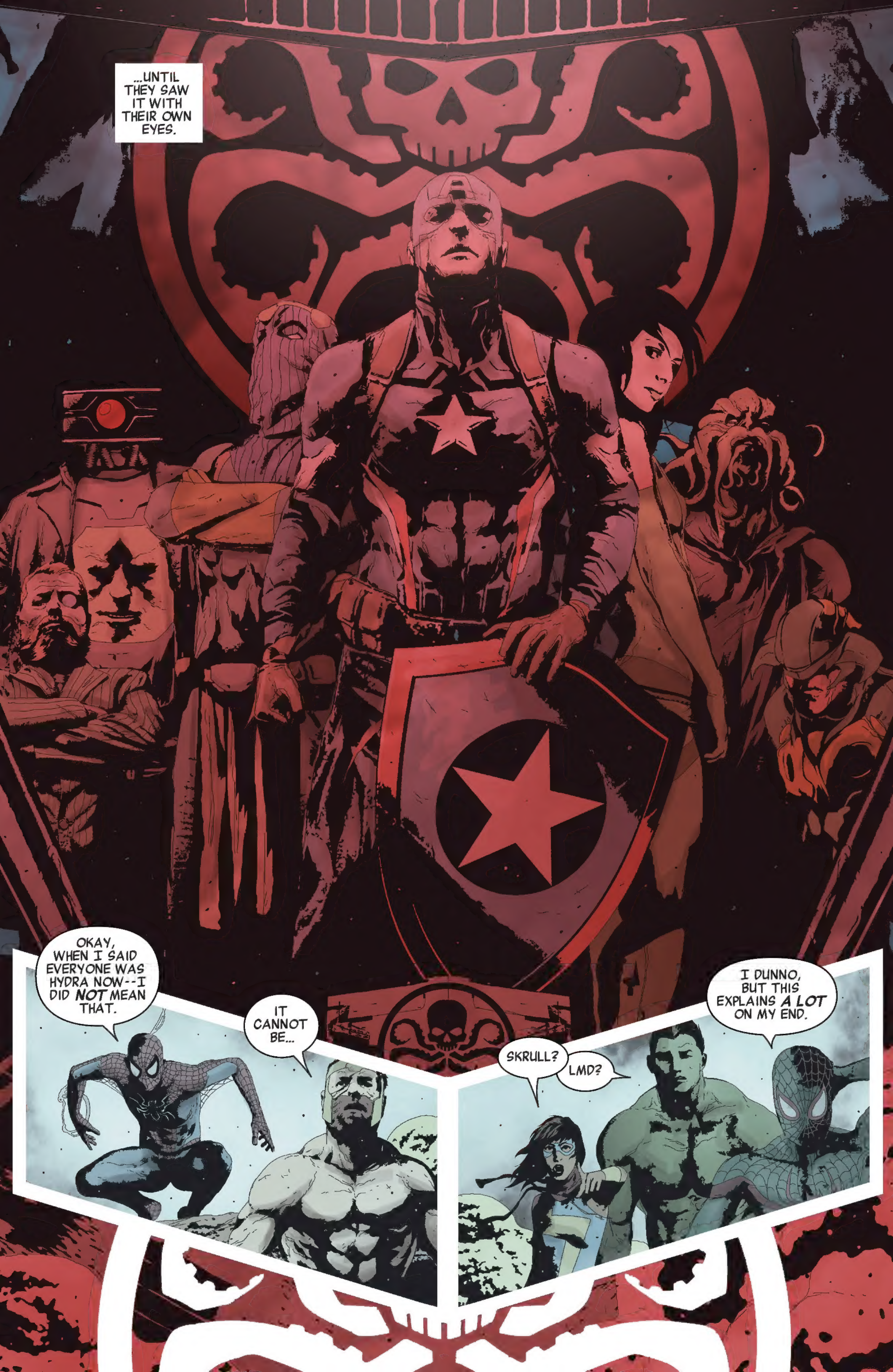
# SECRET EMPIRE

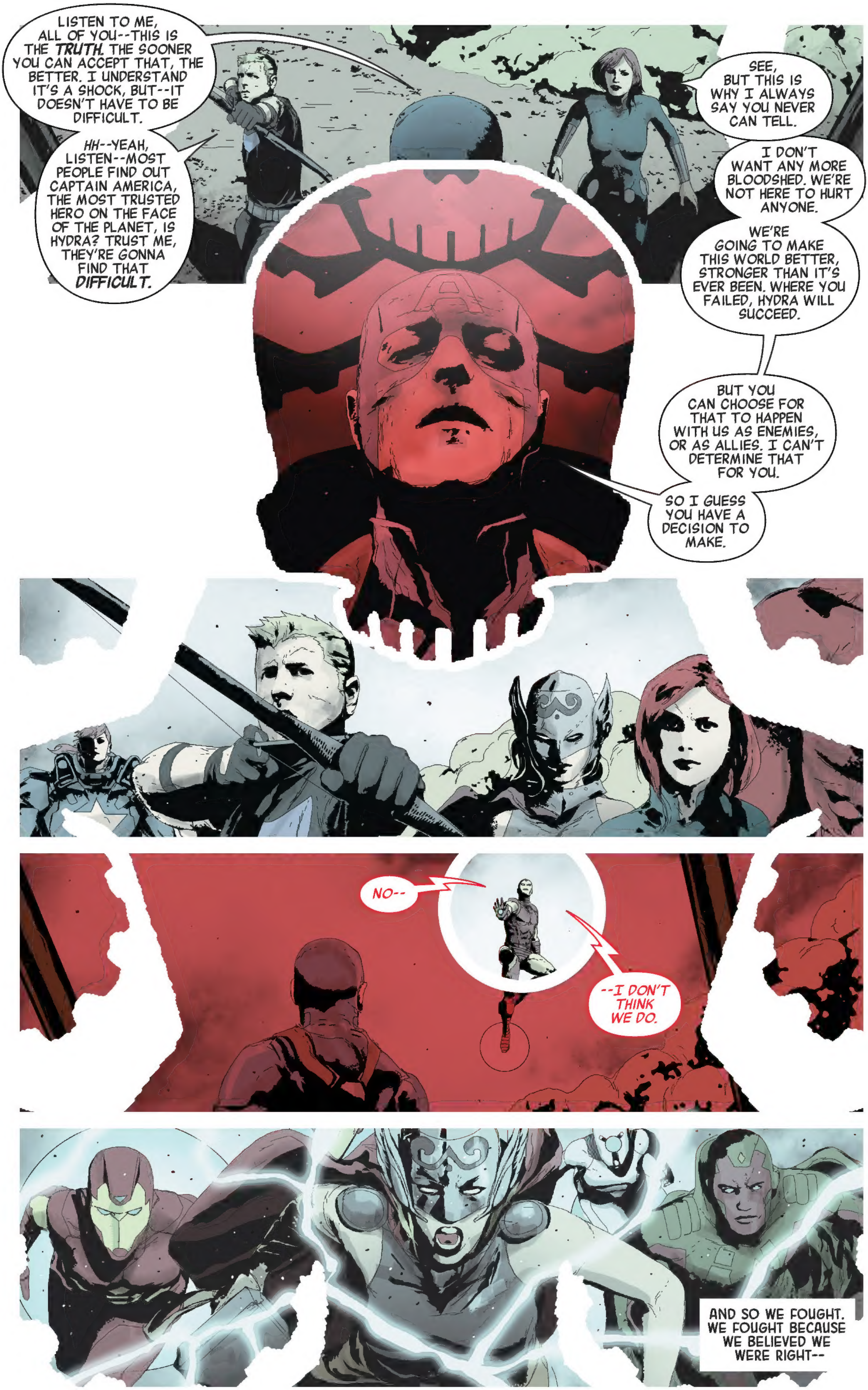

WE WERE SUPPOSED TO BE *HEROES.*
WE WERE SUPPOSED TO *STAND* FOR SOMETHING.
IT'S HARD TO SAY WHEN IT ALL STARTED GOING WRONG--
BUT AT SOME POINT, WE LET THE FIGHT BECOME ABOUT *US*-- NOT THE WORLD WE'D SWORN TO PROTECT.
WE FOUND OURSELVES DIVIDED--
--AND UNDER SIEGE.
SO MANY THREATS, SO MANY DANGERS-- BUT THE ONE THAT WOULD END US--
--WAS THE ONE WE TRUSTED THE MOST.

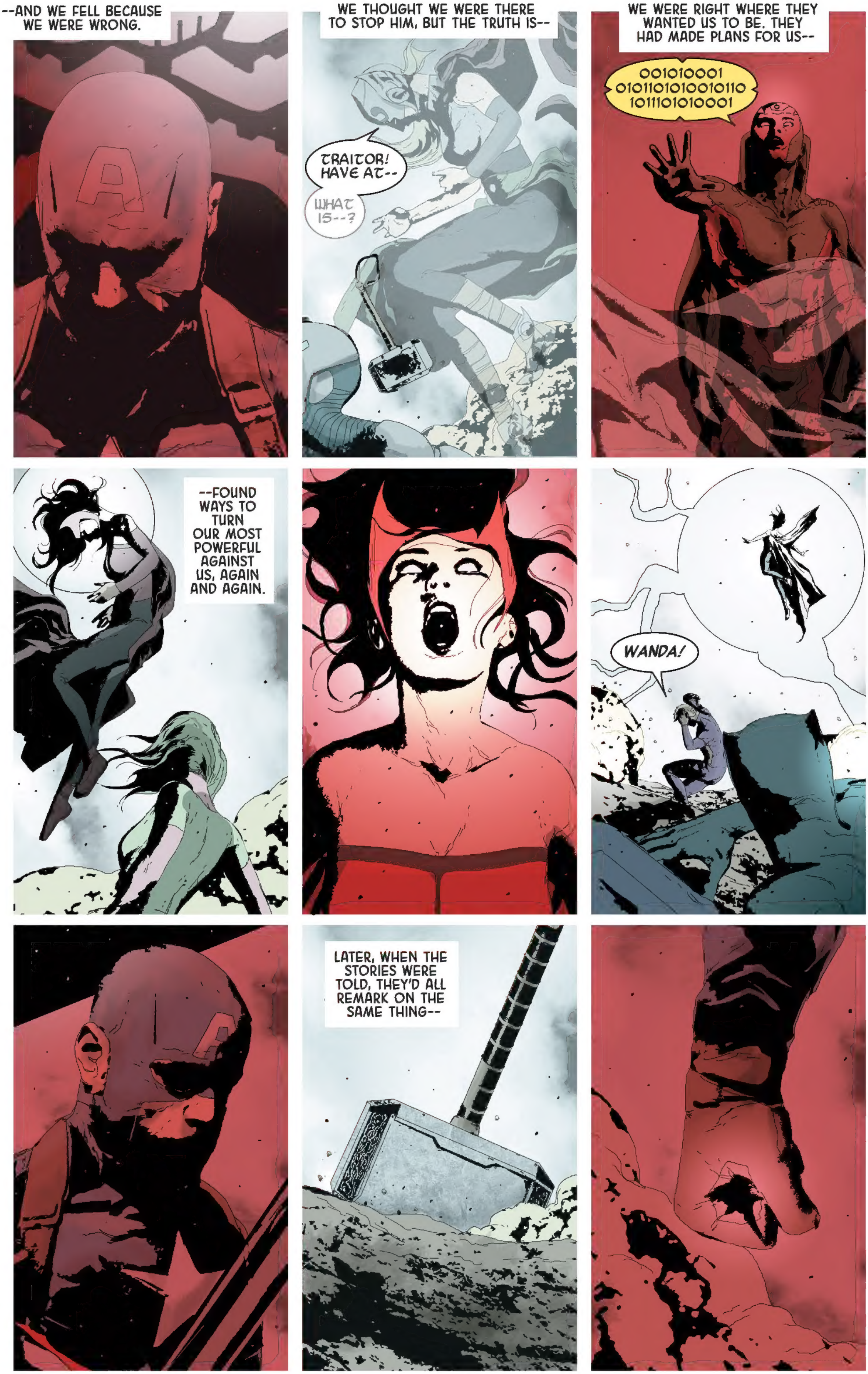

FUNNY HOW THE WORLD CAN CHANGE IN A DAY. HOW SOMETHING SO HORRIBLE--
WASHINGTON, D.C.
HYDRA INVASION, HOUR FOUR.
--CAN SNEAK UP ON YOU SO QUICKLY.
CRASH
TOURISTS.
FREEZE!
DON'T MOVE--
YEAH, OKAY-- BUT I'M GONNA NEED AN ACCURATE HEAD COUNT FOR YOU HYDRA GUYS, YOU KNOW--FOR THE BOOMERANG ARROWS...
BOOMERANG ARROWS? THAT'LL TAKE FOREVER, HAWKEYE--
--AND YOU'RE ALREADY LATE.
STARTER WOULDN'T WORK, NAT.
I LIKED YOU BETTER WHEN YOU WERE RICH.
COME ON--

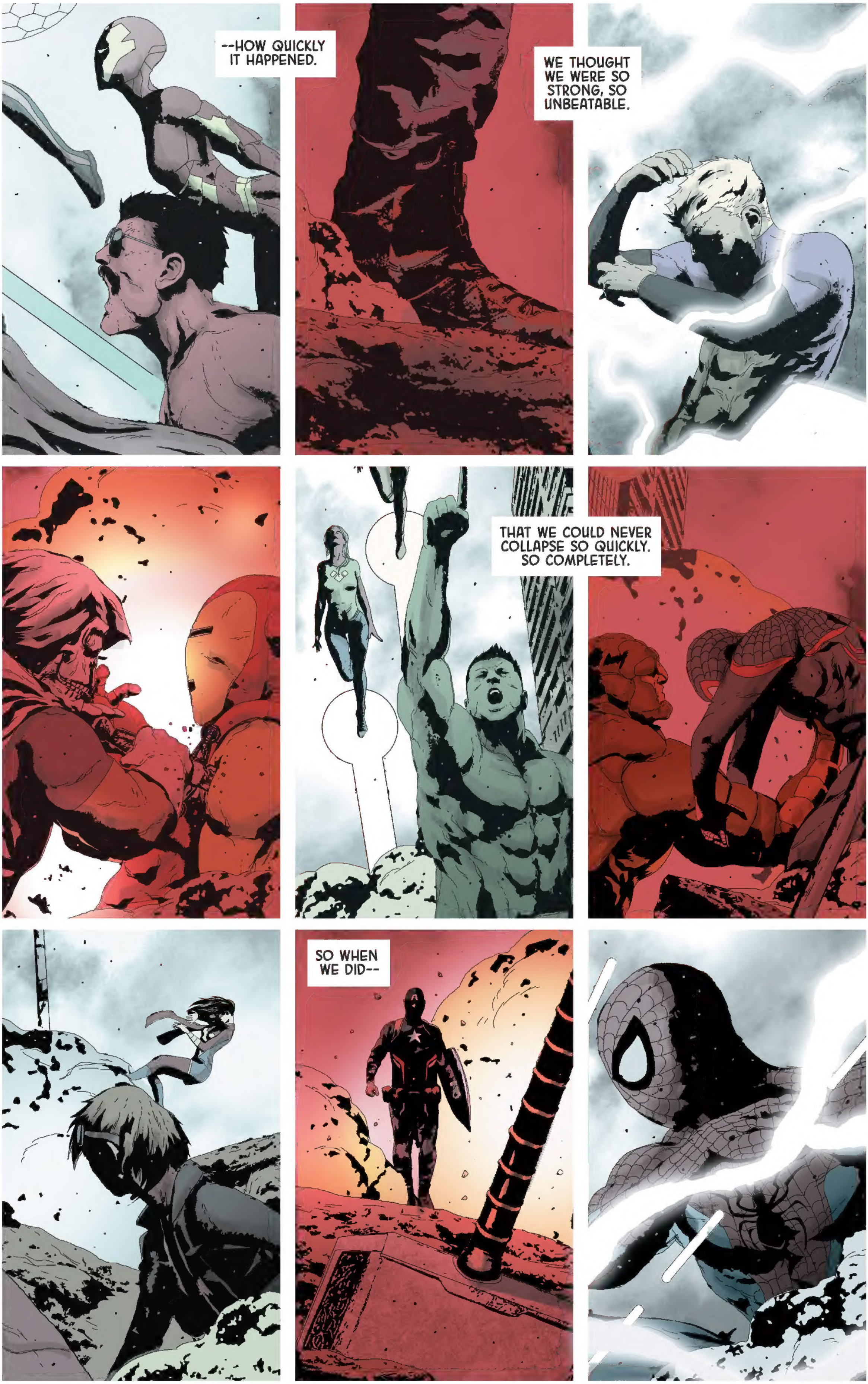

"--YOU'RE GONNA MISS THE WAR."
ATTACK THE AERIAL FIGHTERS! HOLD YOUR GROUND!
HYDRA KNEW WE WERE COMING--THEY'RE READY FOR US--
STRANGE, IT WAS NOT AN APPOINTMENT I HAD ALREADY MADE.
AW, MAN--I NEED A WELL-REGARDED ROGUES' GALLERY, BUT NOT LIKE THIS--YELLOWJACKET'S IN HYDRA NOW?!
I GUESS EVERYBODY IS. MUST'VE HAD ONE OF THOSE FRIEND REFERRAL DEALS.
THAT'S HOW I GOT FREE NETFLIX.
THIS IS A GOOD PLAN, RIRI. THIS IS A PLAN THAT COULD ALMOST BEAT US.
ALMOST? CAN'T IMAGINE IT COULD GET MUCH WORSE. LOVING THE THROWBACK JERSEY, BY THE WAY.
OH--
--IT'S GOING TO GET A LOT WORSE.
AND STARK WAS RIGHT.

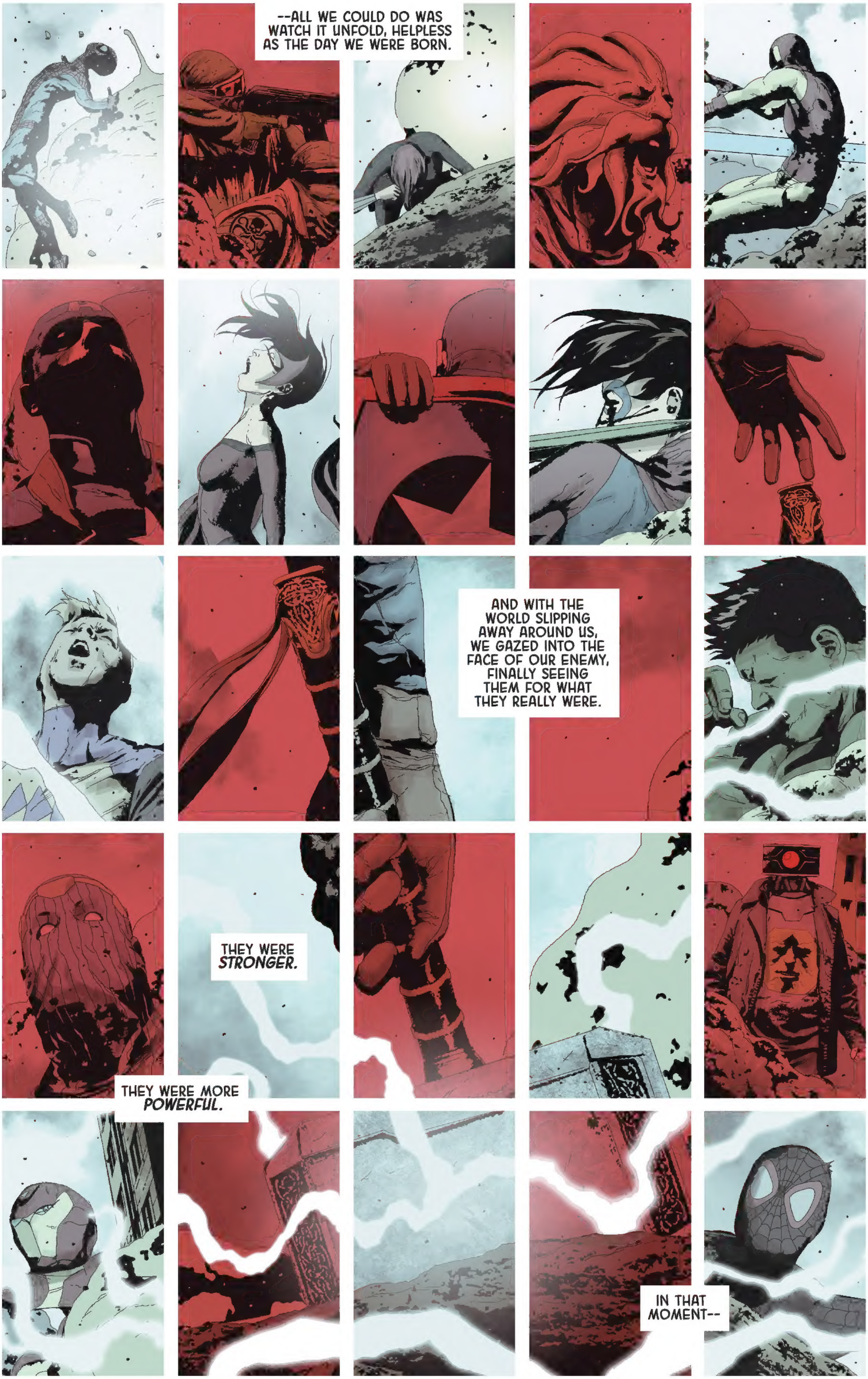

WE'D WON SO MANY TIMES AGAINST IMPOSSIBLE ODDS, WE STARTED TO TAKE IT FOR GRANTED.
STARTED TO BELIEVE WE WERE DESTINED TO COME OUT ON TOP.
BUT SOMETHING FELT *DIFFERENT* THIS TIME.
WE'D BEEN PUSHED BEYOND OUR BREAKING POINT SLOWLY, METHODICALLY. AND JUST AS WE WERE THINKING WE'D ALMOST SURVIVED IT--
--THEY STRUCK THE *REAL* BLOW.
OKAY, THAT DOES *NOT* LOOK GOOD.
I DISAGREE. IT MEANS THEIR LEADERS HAVE ARRIVED. AND WE CAN DEFEAT THEM ALONG WITH--
THOOM
AS THE BATTLE BEGAN, THERE HAD ALREADY BEEN SUSPICIONS. WHISPERS. SOME KNEW WHO IT MUST BE-- HYDRA'S NEW SECRET LEADER.
THERE WAS ONLY ONE PERSON WHO COULD'VE ORCHESTRATED ALL THIS, AFTER ALL. EVEN STILL, THEY REFUSED TO BELIEVE...

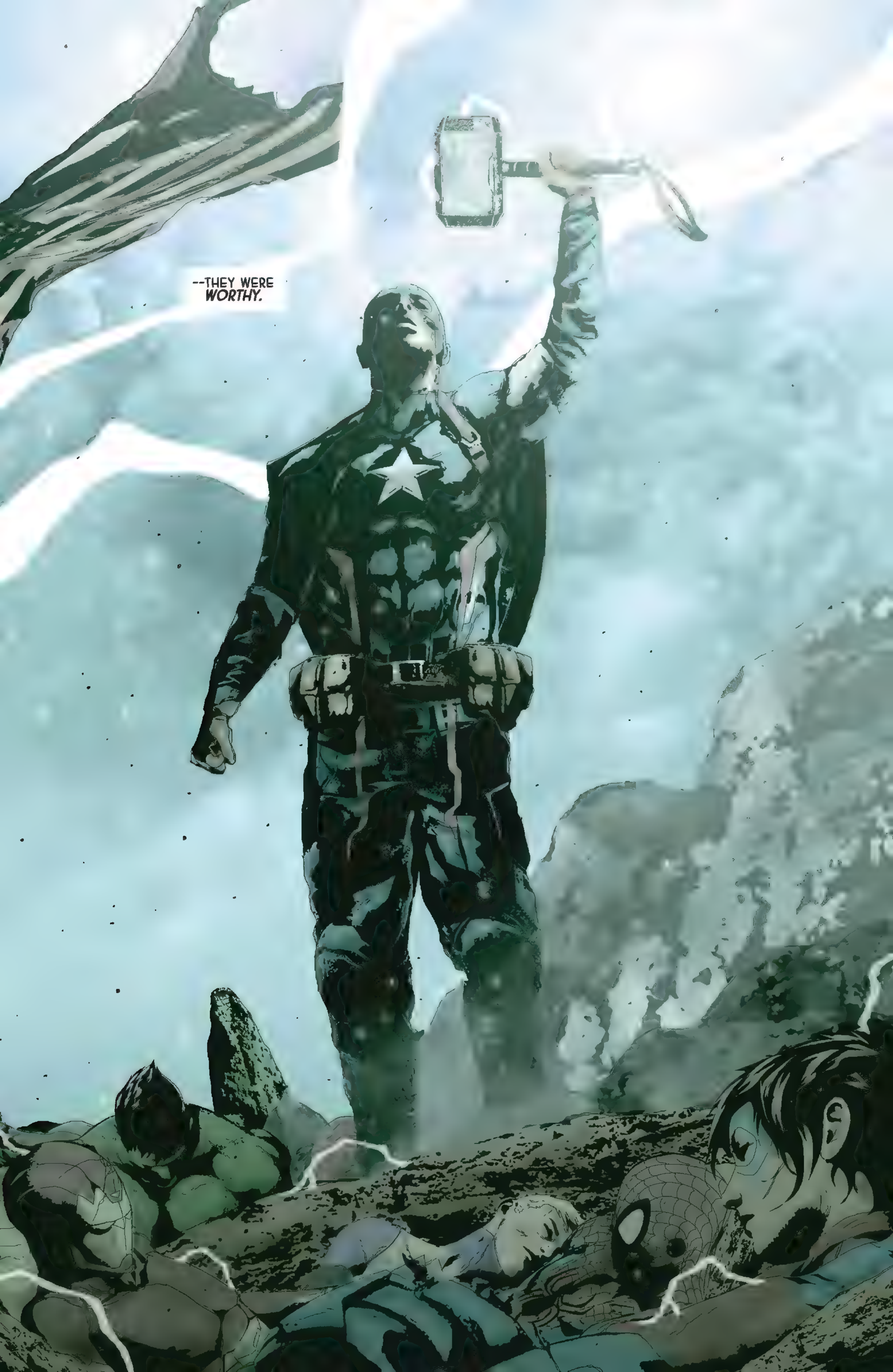

...UNTIL THEY SAW IT WITH THEIR OWN EYES.
OKAY, WHEN I SAID EVERYONE WAS HYDRA NOW--I DID **NOT** MEAN THAT.
IT CANNOT BE...
SKRULL?
LMD?
I DUNNO, BUT THIS EXPLAINS **A LOT** ON MY END.


LISTEN TO ME, ALL OF YOU--THIS IS THE **TRUTH.** THE SOONER YOU CAN ACCEPT THAT, THE BETTER. I UNDERSTAND IT'S A SHOCK, BUT--IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE DIFFICULT.
*HH*--YEAH, LISTEN--MOST PEOPLE FIND OUT CAPTAIN AMERICA, THE MOST TRUSTED HERO ON THE FACE OF THE PLANET, IS HYDRA? TRUST ME, THEY'RE GONNA FIND THAT ***DIFFICULT.***
SEE, BUT THIS IS WHY I ALWAYS SAY YOU NEVER CAN TELL.
I DON'T WANT ANY MORE BLOODSHED. WE'RE NOT HERE TO HURT ANYONE.
WE'RE GOING TO MAKE THIS WORLD BETTER, STRONGER THAN IT'S EVER BEEN. WHERE YOU FAILED, HYDRA WILL SUCCEED.
BUT YOU CAN CHOOSE FOR THAT TO HAPPEN WITH US AS ENEMIES, OR AS ALLIES. I CAN'T DETERMINE THAT FOR YOU.
SO I GUESS YOU HAVE A DECISION TO MAKE.
*NO--*
*--I DON'T THINK WE DO.*
AND SO WE FOUGHT. WE FOUGHT BECAUSE WE BELIEVED WE WERE RIGHT--


--AND WE FELL BECAUSE WE WERE WRONG.
WE THOUGHT WE WERE THERE TO STOP HIM, BUT THE TRUTH IS--
TRAITOR! HAVE AT--
WHAT IS--?
WE WERE RIGHT WHERE THEY WANTED US TO BE. THEY HAD MADE PLANS FOR US--
001010001 010110101001010110 1011101010001
--FOUND WAYS TO TURN OUR MOST POWERFUL AGAINST US, AGAIN AND AGAIN.
WANDA!
LATER, WHEN THE STORIES WERE TOLD, THEY'D ALL REMARK ON THE SAME THING--


--HOW QUICKLY IT HAPPENED.
WE THOUGHT WE WERE SO STRONG, SO UNBEATABLE.
THAT WE COULD NEVER COLLAPSE SO QUICKLY. SO COMPLETELY.
SO WHEN WE DID--


--ALL WE COULD DO WAS WATCH IT UNFOLD, HELPLESS AS THE DAY WE WERE BORN.
AND WITH THE WORLD SLIPPING AWAY AROUND US, WE GAZED INTO THE FACE OF OUR ENEMY, FINALLY SEEING THEM FOR WHAT THEY REALLY WERE.
THEY WERE *STRONGER.*
THEY WERE MORE *POWERFUL.*
IN THAT MOMENT--


--THEY WERE *WORTHY.*

“NICK SPENCER IS A FANTASTIC WRITER.” —OUTRIGHTGEEKERY.COM

# SECRET EMPIRE

MARVEL

SPENCER · McNIVEN · SORRENTINO · YU · ACUÑA · REIS · CASSARA

SECRET EMPIRE

# SECRET EMPIRE

WRITER: **NICK SPENCER**

### SECRET EMPIRE #0

ARTIST: **DANIEL ACUÑA**
PROLOGUE ARTIST: **ROD REIS**

### FREE COMIC BOOK DAY 2017 (SECRET EMPIRE)

ARTIST: **ANDREA SORRENTINO**

### SECRET EMPIRE #1

PENCILER: **STEVE McNIVEN**
INKER: **JAY LEISTEN**
COLOR ARTIST: **MATTHEW WILSON**

### SECRET EMPIRE #2-3

ARTISTS: **ANDREA SORRENTINO**
WITH **ROD REIS**

### SECRET EMPIRE #4, #6

PENCILER: **LEINIL FRANCIS YU**
INKERS: **GERRY ALANGUILAN**
WITH **LEINIL FRANCIS YU** (#6)
COLOR ARTISTS: **SUNNY GHO**
WITH **JAVA TARTAGLIA** (#6)
ADDITIONAL ART: **ROD REIS; JOSHUA CASSARA** & **RACHELLE ROSENBERG**

### SECRET EMPIRE #5, #7

ARTIST: **ANDREA SORRENTINO**
ADDITIONAL ART: **ROD REIS; JOSHUA CASSARA** & **RACHELLE ROSENBERG**

### CAPTAIN AMERICA #25

ARTISTS: **JESÚS SAIZ**
WITH **JOE BENNETT** & **JOE PIMENTEL**
COLOR ARTIST: **RACHELLE ROSENBERG**

### SECRET EMPIRE #8

ARTIST: **DANIEL ACUÑA**
ADDITIONAL ART: **ROD REIS; SEAN IZAAKSE** & **JAVA TARTAGLIA**

### SECRET EMPIRE #9

PENCILERS: **LEINIL FRANCIS YU**
WITH **JOE BENNETT**
INKERS: **GERRY ALANGUILAN**
WITH **LEINIL FRANCIS YU** & **JOE PIMENTEL**
COLOR ARTISTS: **SUNNY GHO**
WITH **DONO SÁNCHEZ-ALMARA**
ADDITIONAL ART: **ROD REIS**

### SECRET EMPIRE #10

PENCILER: **STEVE McNIVEN**
INKER: **JAY LEISTEN**
COLOR ARTIST: **MATTHEW WILSON**
ADDITIONAL ART: **ROD REIS; DAVID MARQUEZ; PACO MEDINA, JUAN VLASCO** & **JESUS ABURTOV; RON LIM**

### SECRET EMPIRE OMEGA

ARTIST: **ANDREA SORRENTINO**
ADDITIONAL ART: **JOE BENNETT**
WITH **JOE PIMENTEL; SCOTT HANNA** & **RACHELLE ROSENBERG**

LETTERERS:
**VC's TRAVIS LANHAM**
(*SECRET EMPIRE #0-10, OMEGA* & *FREE COMIC BOOK DAY*)
& **JOE CARAMAGNA** (*CAPTAIN AMERICA #25*)

COVER ART:
**MARK BROOKS**
(*SECRET EMPIRE #0-10, OMEGA* & *FREE COMIC BOOK DAY*)
& **JESÚS SAIZ** (*CAPTAIN AMERICA #25*)

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CAPTAIN AMERICA'S REALITY HAS BEEN SECRETLY REWRITTEN BY KOBIK, A SENTIENT COSMIC CUBE ACTING UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF THE RED SKULL. IN ROGERS' NEW HISTORY, A HYDRA AGENT RECRUITED STEVE TO THE VILLAINOUS ORGANIZATION AS A CHILD, AND HE WAS RAISED TO BELIEVE IN THEIR IDEOLOGY: THE STRONG RULING THE WEAK, FOR THE GOOD OF ALL. HE'LL STOP AT NOTHING TO BRING HYDRA INTO POWER.

AND AFTER TAKING OVER FROM MARIA HILL AS DIRECTOR OF S.H.I.E.L.D., HE'S FINALLY READY TO MAKE HIS MOVE...

## S.H.I.E.L.D. COMMAND

CAPTAIN AMERICA

SHARON CARTER

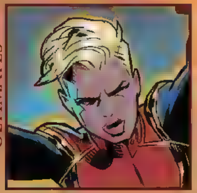
## MICHIGAN

IRONHEART

IRON MAN

## ALPHA FLIGHT SPACE STATION

ULTIMATES


CAPTAIN MARVEL

AMERICA CHAVEZ

SPECTRUM

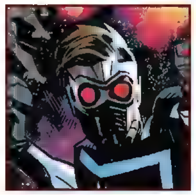
BLUE MARVEL

QUASAR

HYPERION

GUARDIANS

ROCKET & GROOT


STAR-LORD

GAMORA

## NEW YORK CITY

HYDRA FORCES

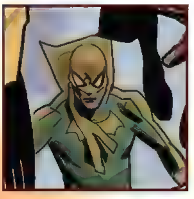
BARON ZEMO

ARMY OF EVIL

DEFENDERS

LUKE CAGE

JESSICA JONES


IRON FIST

DAREDEVIL

SPIDER-WOMAN

DOCTOR STRANGE

CLOAK

DAGGER

WASP

ROGUE

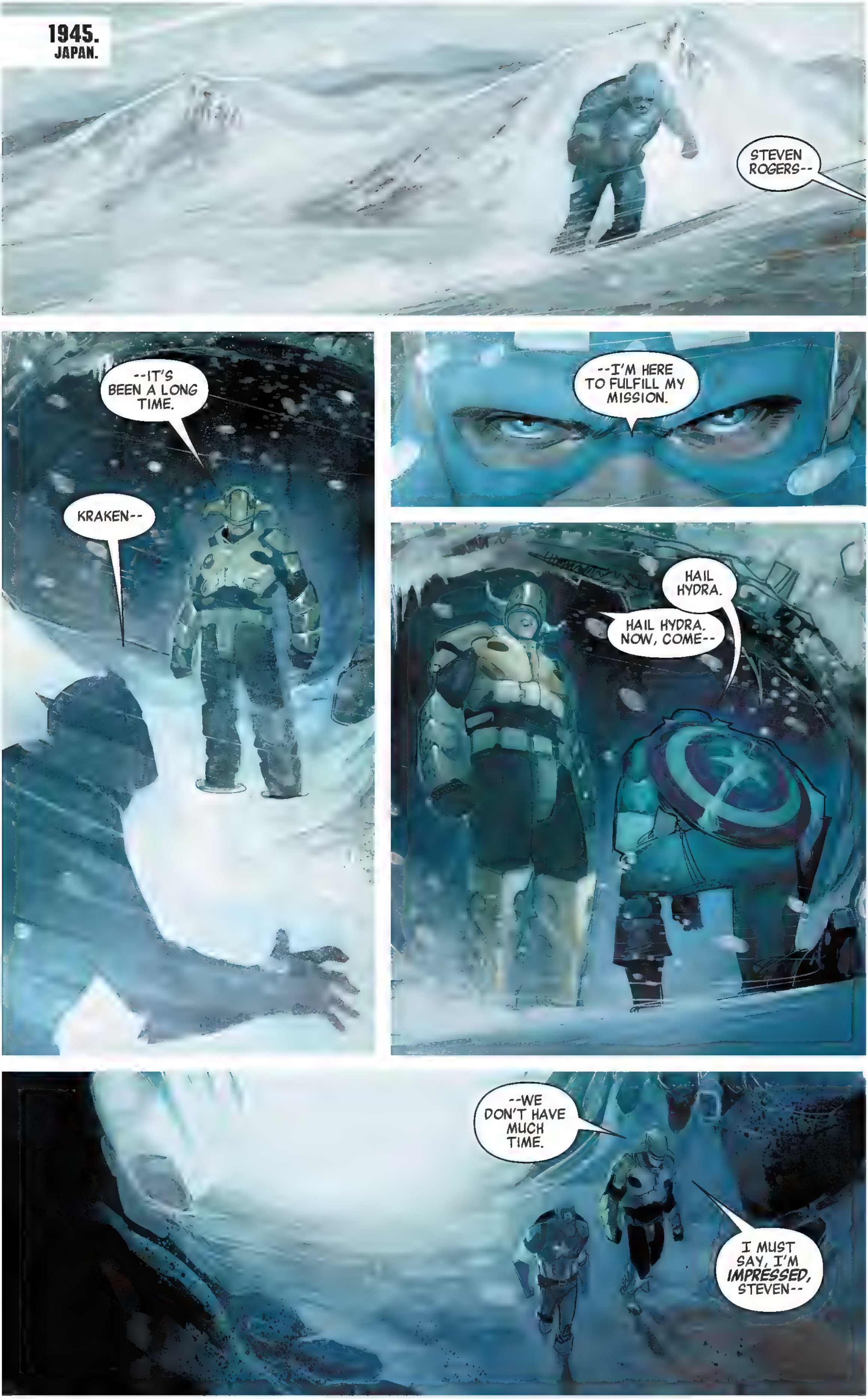
UNCANNY AVENGERS

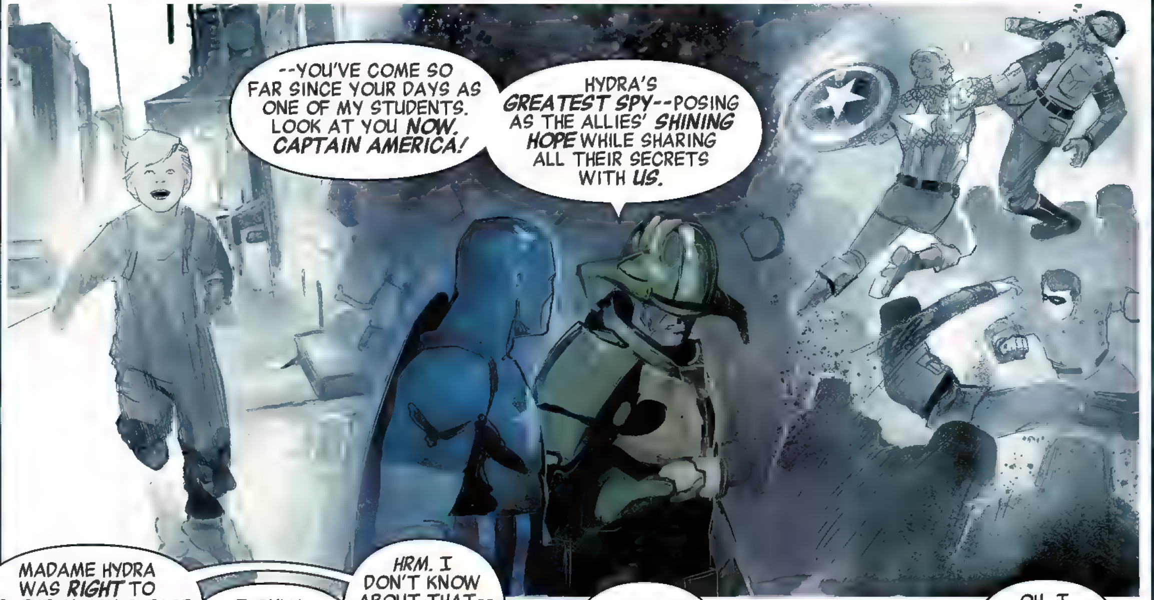
# SECRET EMPIRE™

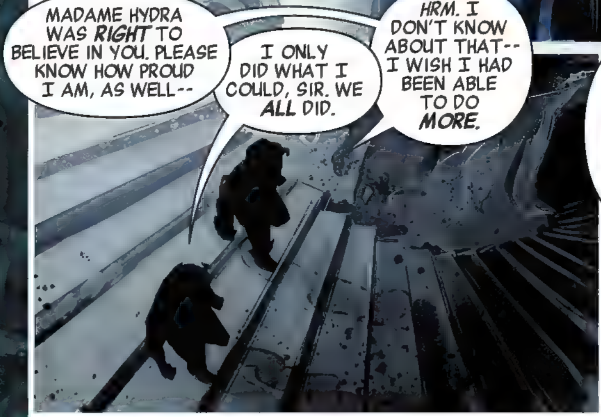
## #0

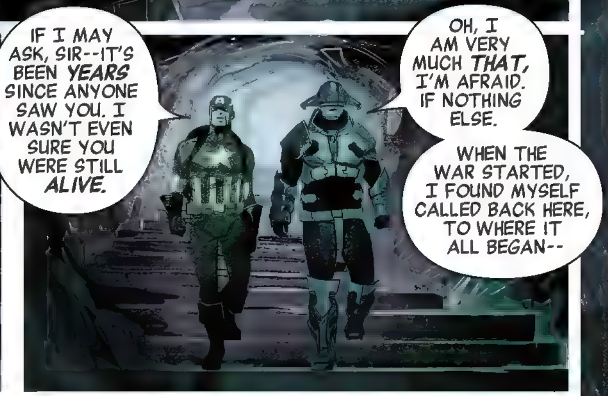
MARVEL
BROOKS

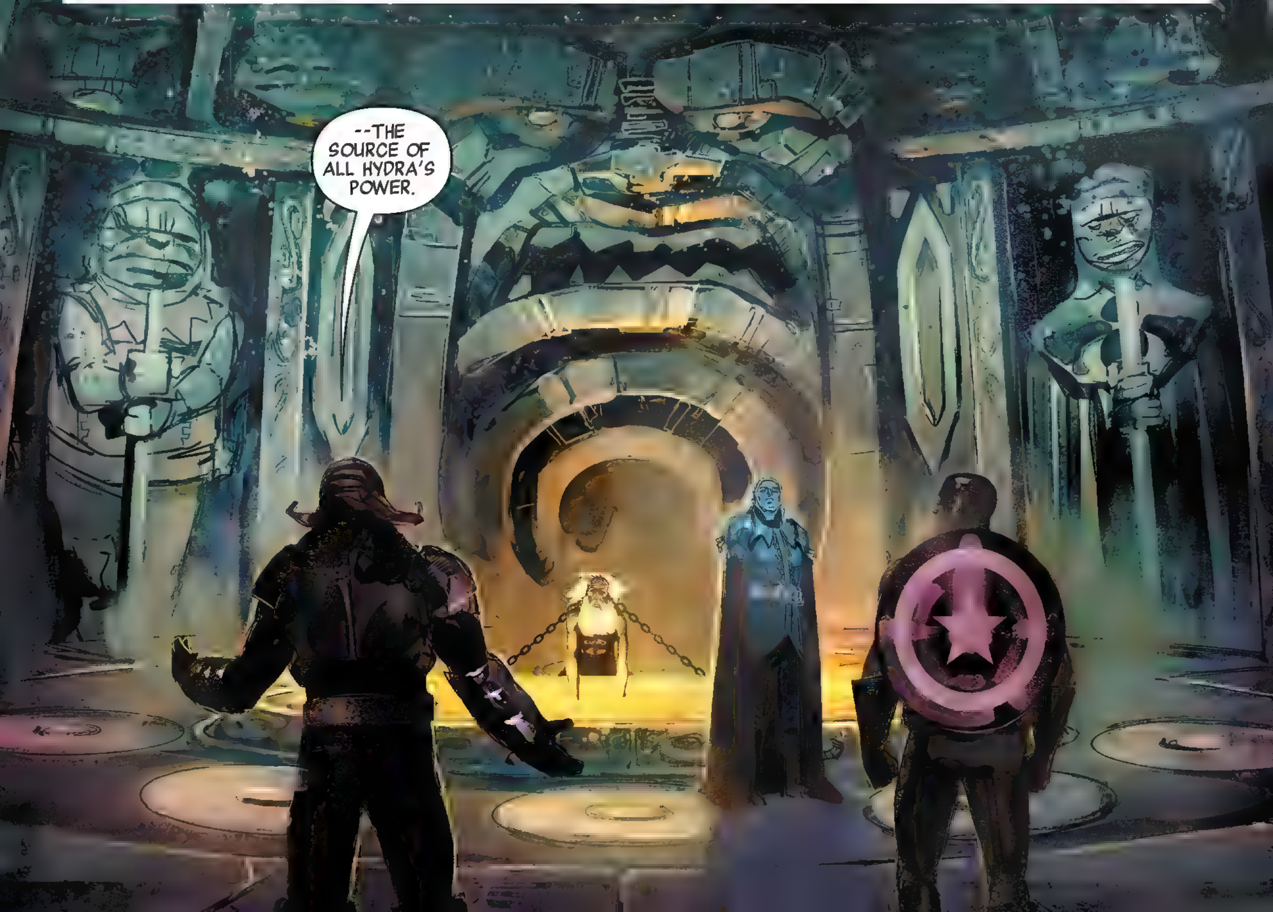
NICK SPENCER • DANIEL ACUÑA • ROD REIS

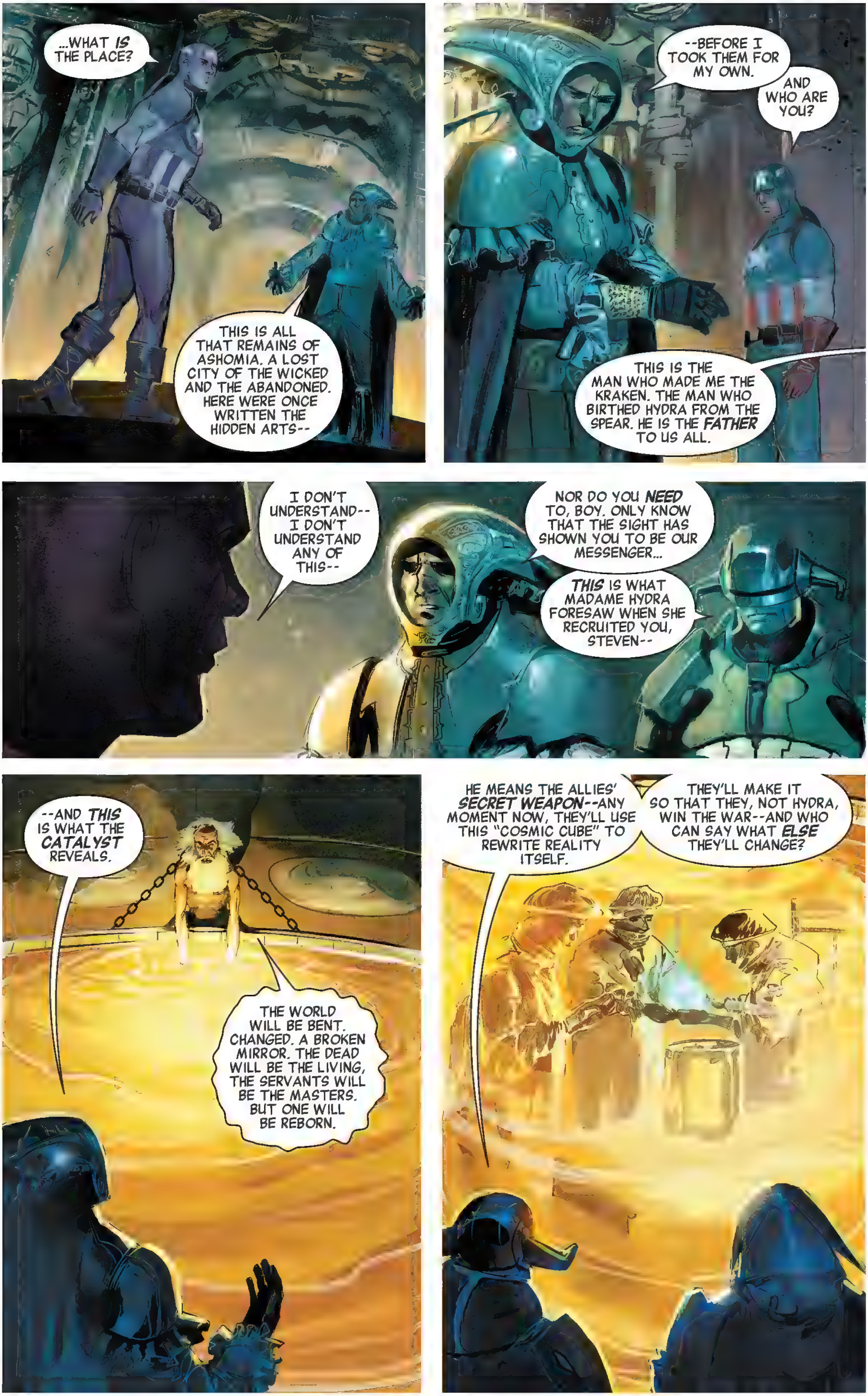

1945.
JAPAN.
STEVEN ROGERS--
--IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME.
KRAKEN--
--I'M HERE TO FULFILL MY MISSION.
HAIL HYDRA.
HAIL HYDRA. NOW, COME--
--WE DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME.
I MUST SAY, I'M *IMPRESSED*, STEVEN--

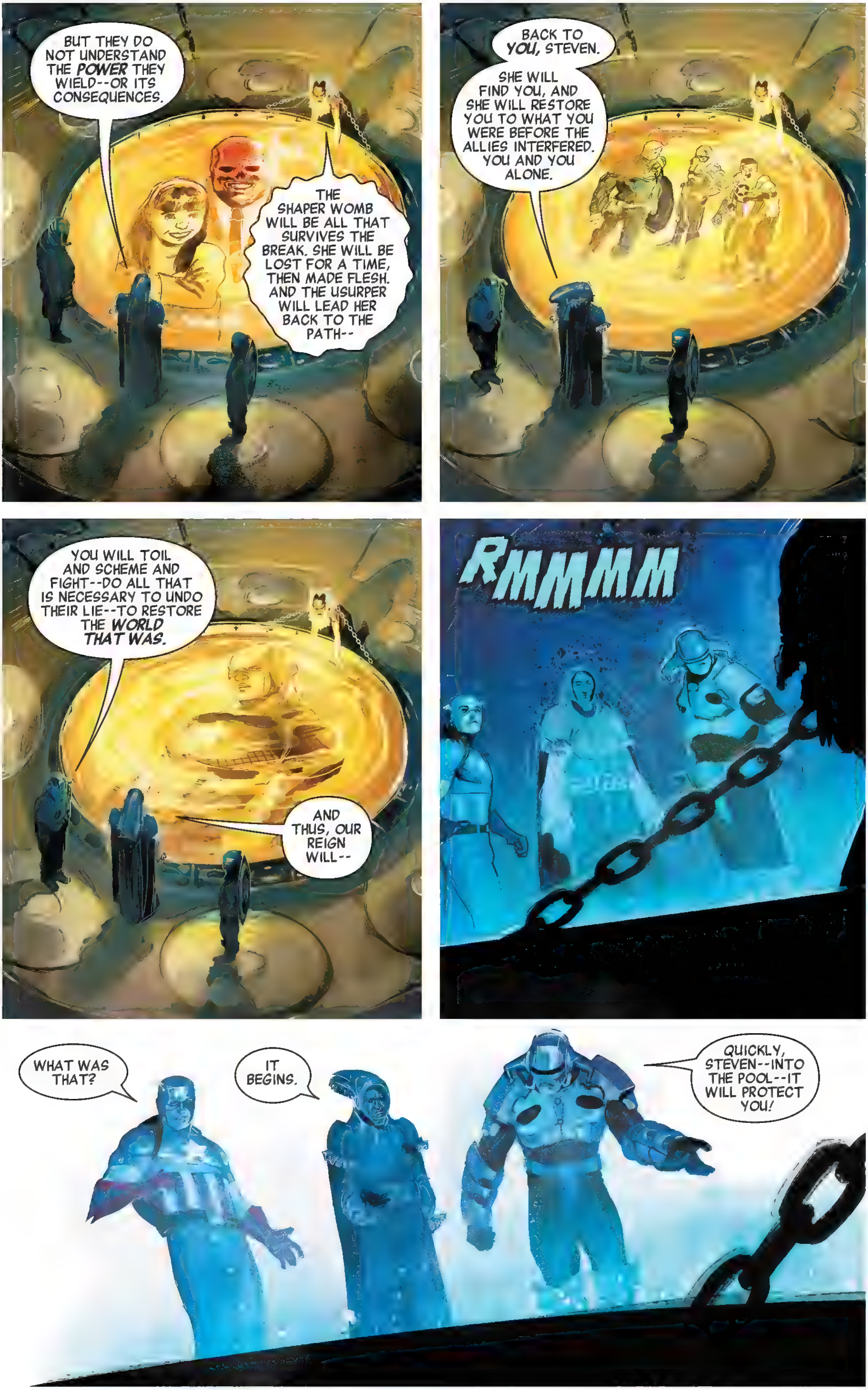

--YOU'VE COME SO FAR SINCE YOUR DAYS AS ONE OF MY STUDENTS. LOOK AT YOU NOW, CAPTAIN AMERICA!
HYDRA'S GREATEST SPY--POSING AS THE ALLIES' SHINING HOPE WHILE SHARING ALL THEIR SECRETS WITH US.

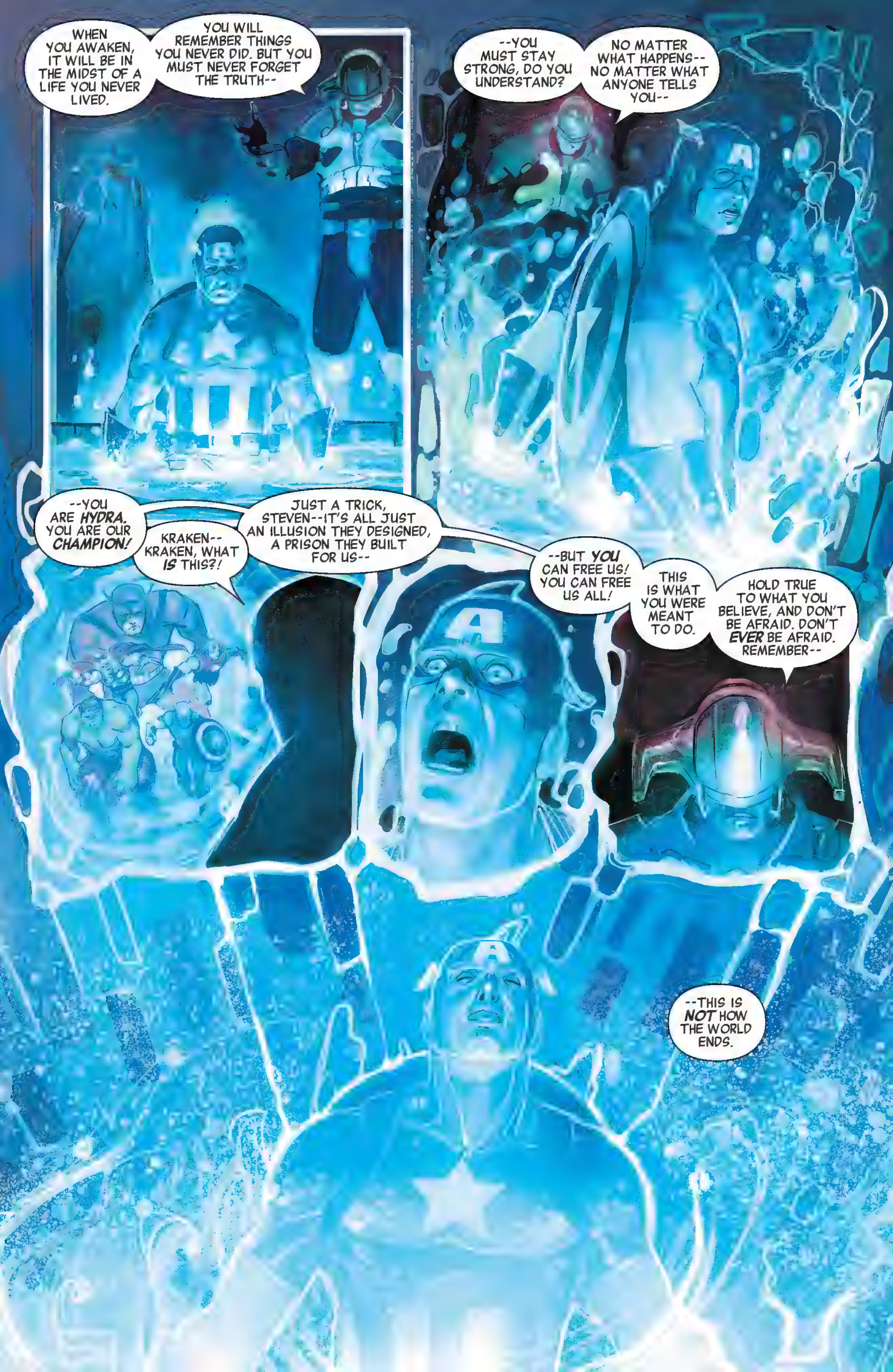

MADAME HYDRA WAS RIGHT TO BELIEVE IN YOU. PLEASE KNOW HOW PROUD I AM, AS WELL--
I ONLY DID WHAT I COULD, SIR. WE ALL DID.
HRM. I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THAT--I WISH I HAD BEEN ABLE TO DO MORE.


IF I MAY ASK, SIR--IT'S BEEN YEARS SINCE ANYONE SAW YOU. I WASN'T EVEN SURE YOU WERE STILL ALIVE.
OH, I AM VERY MUCH THAT, I'M AFRAID. IF NOTHING ELSE.
WHEN THE WAR STARTED, I FOUND MYSELF CALLED BACK HERE, TO WHERE IT ALL BEGAN--


--THE SOURCE OF ALL HYDRA'S POWER.


...WHAT *IS* THE PLACE?
THIS IS ALL THAT REMAINS OF ASHOMIA. A LOST CITY OF THE WICKED AND THE ABANDONED. HERE WERE ONCE WRITTEN THE HIDDEN ARTS--
--BEFORE I TOOK THEM FOR MY OWN.
AND WHO ARE YOU?
THIS IS THE MAN WHO MADE ME THE KRAKEN. THE MAN WHO BIRTHED HYDRA FROM THE SPEAR. HE IS THE *FATHER* TO US ALL.
I DON'T UNDERSTAND-- I DON'T UNDERSTAND ANY OF THIS--
NOR DO YOU *NEED* TO, BOY. ONLY KNOW THAT THE SIGHT HAS SHOWN YOU TO BE OUR MESSENGER...
*THIS* IS WHAT MADAME HYDRA FORESAW WHEN SHE RECRUITED YOU, STEVEN--
--AND *THIS* IS WHAT THE *CATALYST* REVEALS.
THE WORLD WILL BE BENT. CHANGED. A BROKEN MIRROR. THE DEAD WILL BE THE LIVING, THE SERVANTS WILL BE THE MASTERS. BUT ONE WILL BE REBORN.
HE MEANS THE ALLIES' *SECRET WEAPON*--ANY MOMENT NOW, THEY'LL USE THIS "COSMIC CUBE" TO REWRITE REALITY ITSELF.
THEY'LL MAKE IT SO THAT THEY, NOT HYDRA, WIN THE WAR--AND WHO CAN SAY WHAT *ELSE* THEY'LL CHANGE?


BUT THEY DO NOT UNDERSTAND THE *POWER* THEY WIELD--OR ITS CONSEQUENCES.
THE SHAPER WOMB WILL BE ALL THAT SURVIVES THE BREAK. SHE WILL BE LOST FOR A TIME, THEN MADE FLESH. AND THE USURPER WILL LEAD HER BACK TO THE PATH--
BACK TO *YOU,* STEVEN.
SHE WILL FIND YOU, AND SHE WILL RESTORE YOU TO WHAT YOU WERE BEFORE THE ALLIES INTERFERED. YOU AND YOU ALONE.
YOU WILL TOIL AND SCHEME AND FIGHT--DO ALL THAT IS NECESSARY TO UNDO THEIR LIE--TO RESTORE THE *WORLD THAT WAS.*
AND THUS, OUR REIGN WILL--
RMMMM
WHAT WAS THAT?
IT BEGINS.
QUICKLY, STEVEN--INTO THE POOL--IT WILL PROTECT YOU!


WHEN YOU AWAKEN, IT WILL BE IN THE MIDST OF A LIFE YOU NEVER LIVED.
YOU WILL REMEMBER THINGS YOU NEVER DID. BUT YOU MUST NEVER FORGET THE TRUTH--
--YOU MUST STAY STRONG, DO YOU UNDERSTAND?
NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS-- NO MATTER WHAT ANYONE TELLS YOU--
--YOU ARE **HYDRA.** YOU ARE OUR ***CHAMPION!***
KRAKEN--KRAKEN, WHAT ***IS*** THIS?!
JUST A TRICK, STEVEN--IT'S ALL JUST AN ILLUSION THEY DESIGNED, A PRISON THEY BUILT FOR US--
--BUT ***YOU*** CAN FREE US! YOU CAN FREE US ALL!
THIS IS WHAT YOU WERE MEANT TO DO.
HOLD TRUE TO WHAT YOU BELIEVE, AND DON'T BE AFRAID. DON'T ***EVER*** BE AFRAID. REMEMBER--
--THIS IS ***NOT*** HOW THE WORLD ENDS.

# SECRET EMPIRE

Captain America's reality has been secretly rewritten by Kobik, a sentient Cosmic Cube acting under the influence of the Red Skull. In Rogers' new history, A Hydra agent recruited Steve to the villainous organization as a child, and he was raised to believe in their ideology: the strong ruling the weak, for the good of all. He'll stop at nothing to bring Hydra into power.

And after taking over from Maria Hill as Director of S.H.I.E.L.D., he's finally ready to make his move...

Writer ▪ Nick Spencer Artist ▪ Daniel Acuña
Prologue Artist ▪ Rod Reis
Letterer ▪ VC's Travis Lanham
Recap page art ▪ Andrea Sorrentino
Cover ▪ Mark Brooks
Variant Covers ▪ Rod Reis; Elizabeth Torque; Ron Frenz, Brett Breeding & Rain Beredo

Production Design ▪ Carlos Lao Assistant Editor ▪ Alanna Smith
Editor ▪ Tom Brevoort Editor in Chief ▪ Axel Alonso
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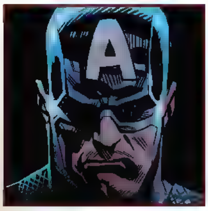
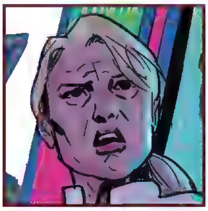
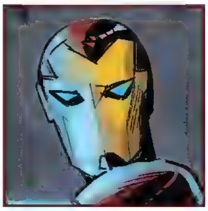
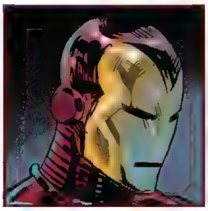
## S.H.I.E.L.D. COMMAND


Captain America


Sharon Carter

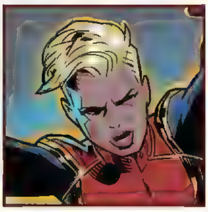
## MICHIGAN

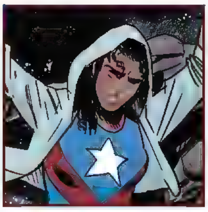

Ironheart

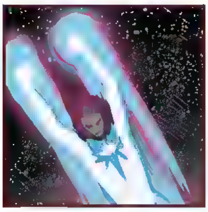

Iron Man

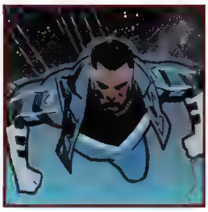
## ALPHA FLIGHT SPACE STATION

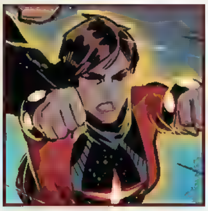
Ultimates

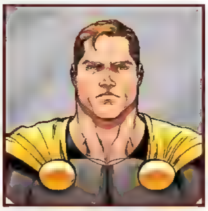

Captain Marvel


America Chavez


Spectrum


Blue Marvel


Quasar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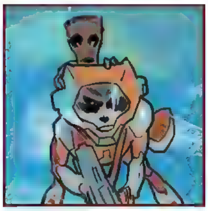
Guardians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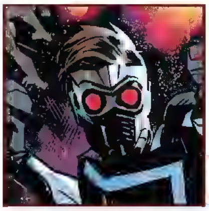
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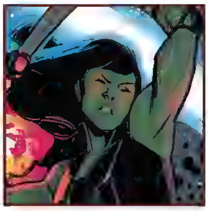
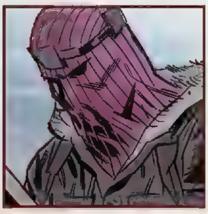

Gamora

## NEW YORK CITY

Hydra Forces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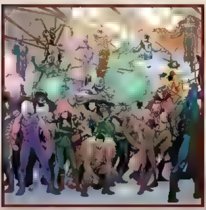
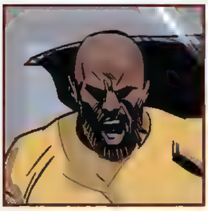

Army of Evil

Defenders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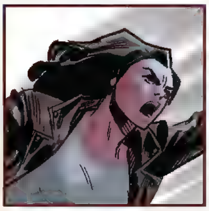
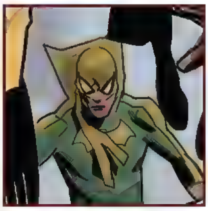

Jessica Jones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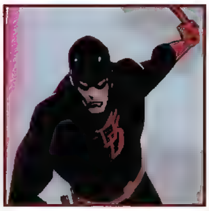
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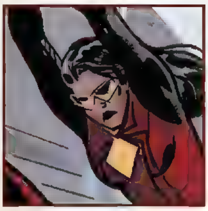
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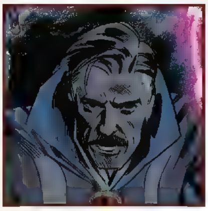
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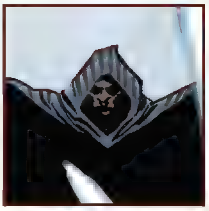
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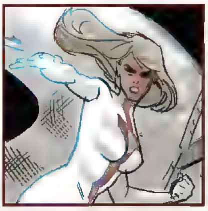
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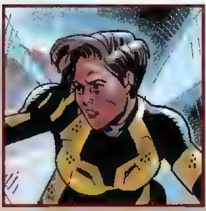
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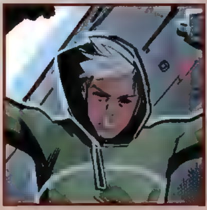
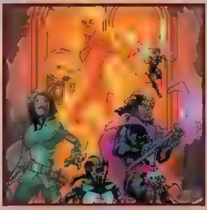
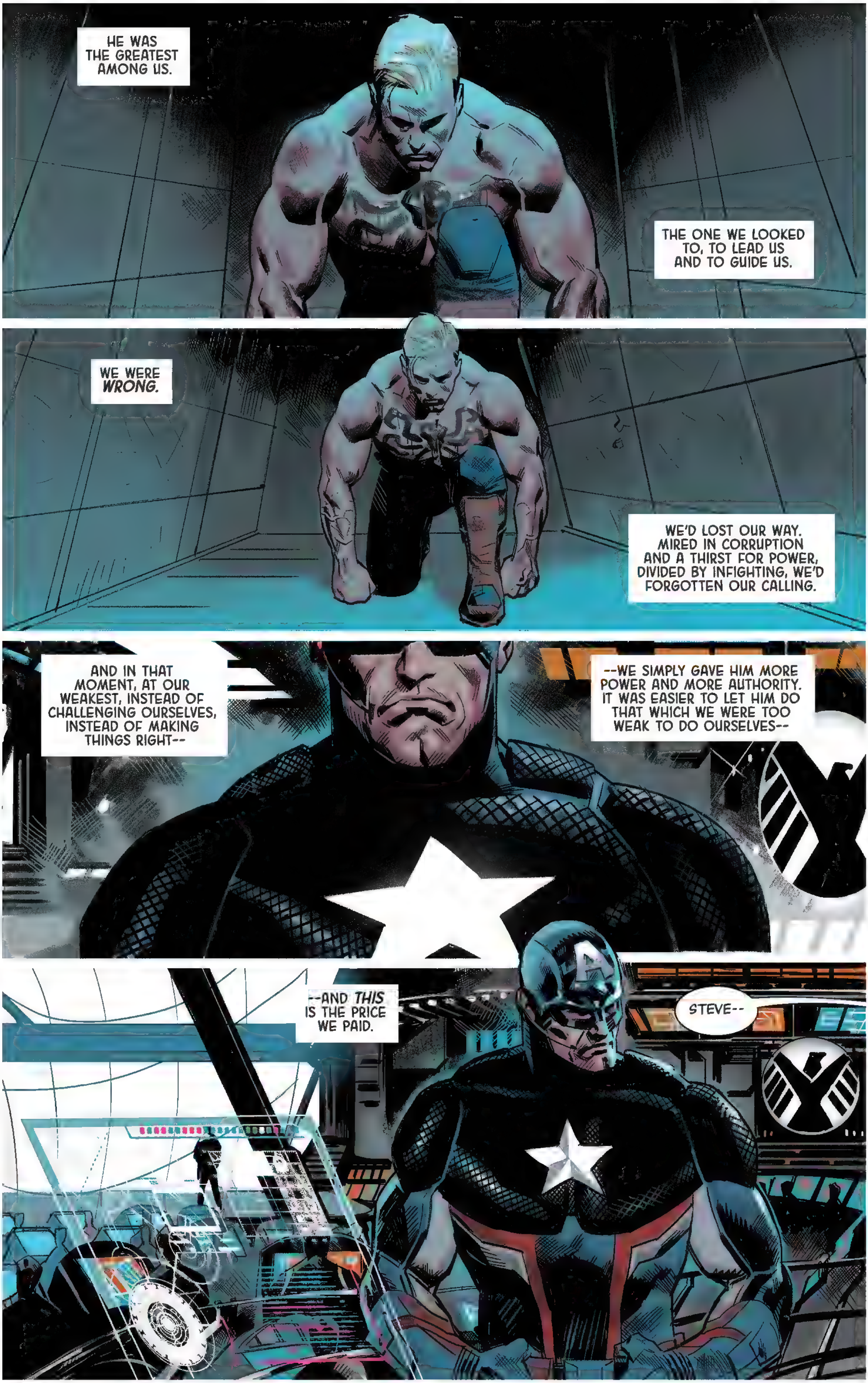
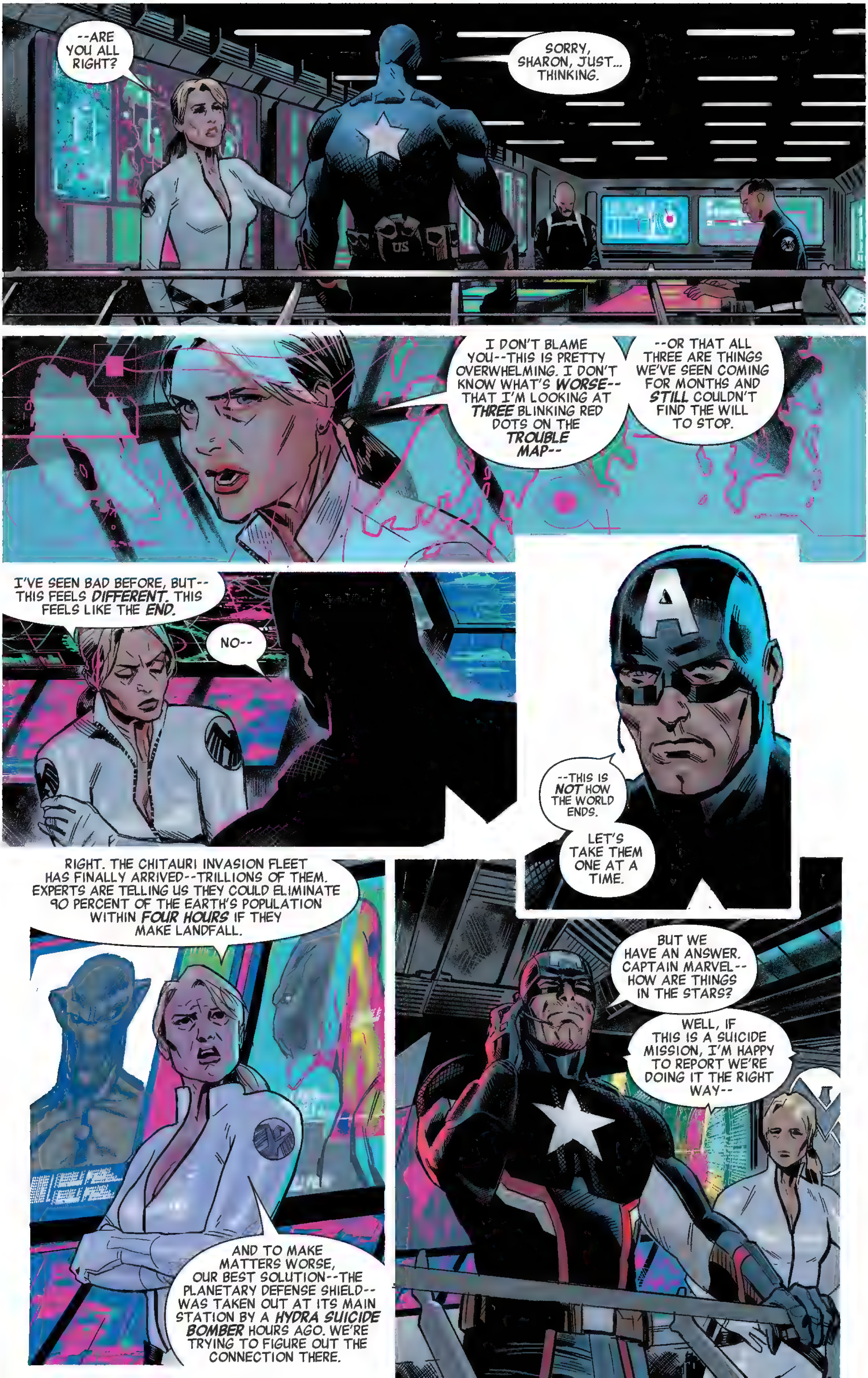
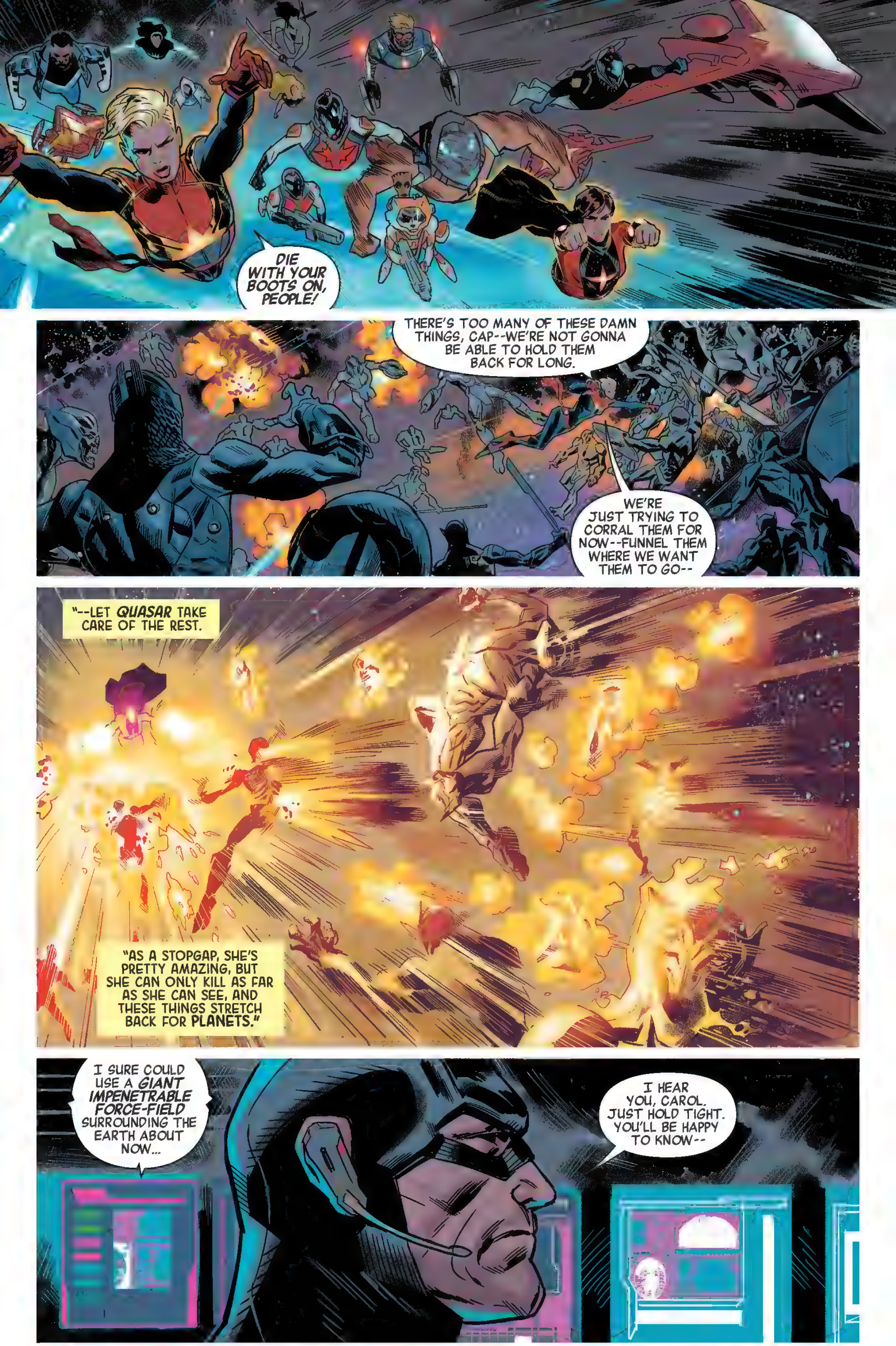
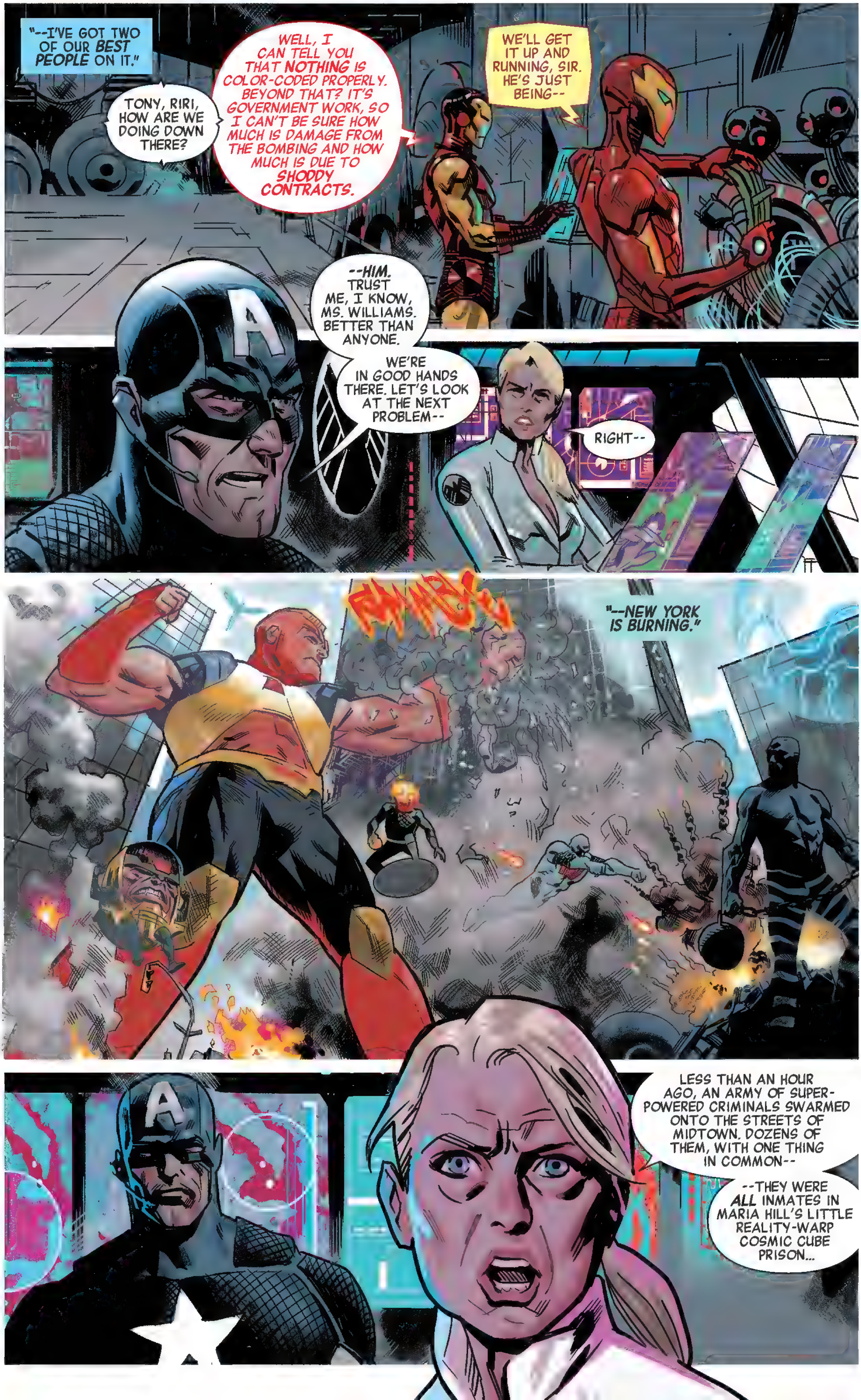

Rogue

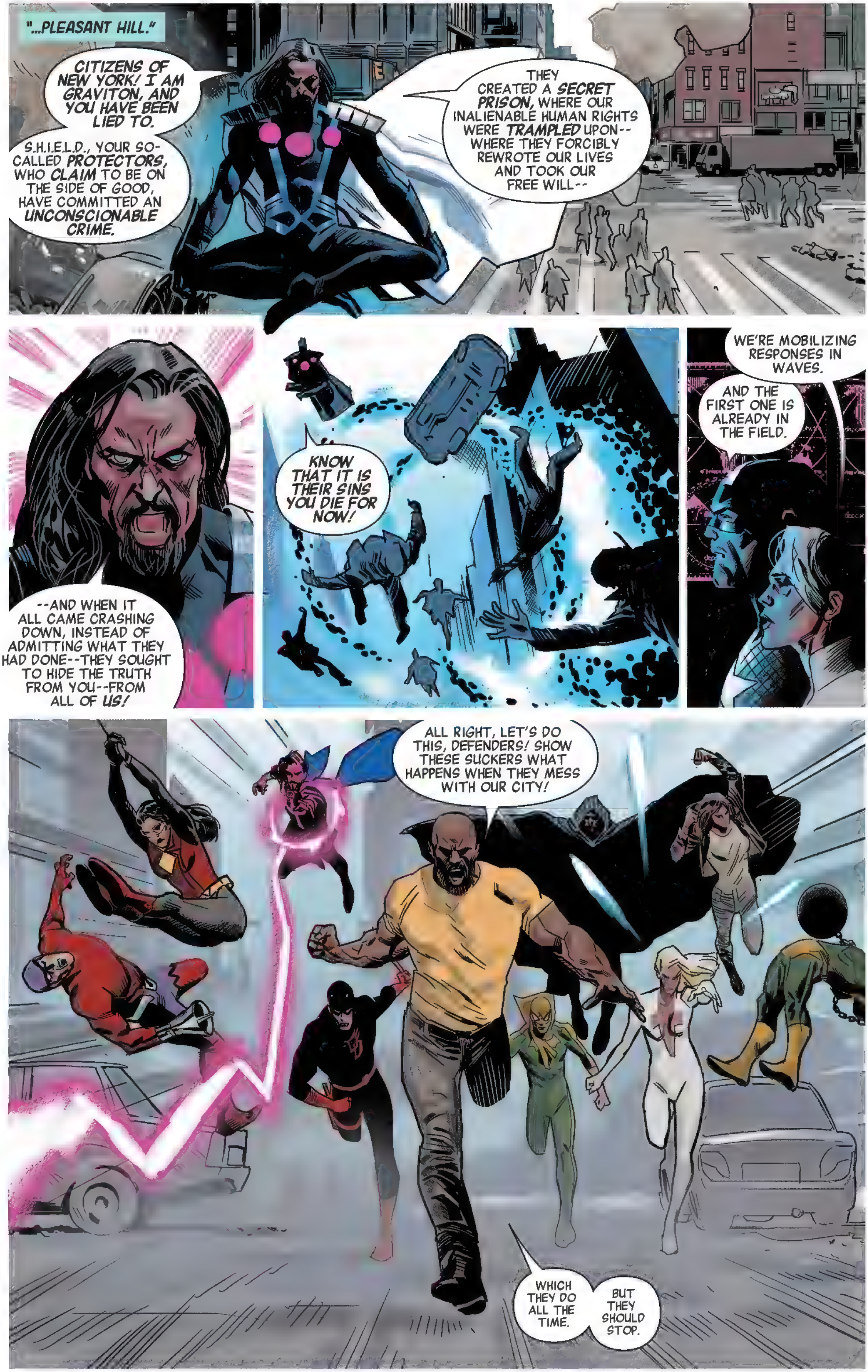

Uncanny Avengers

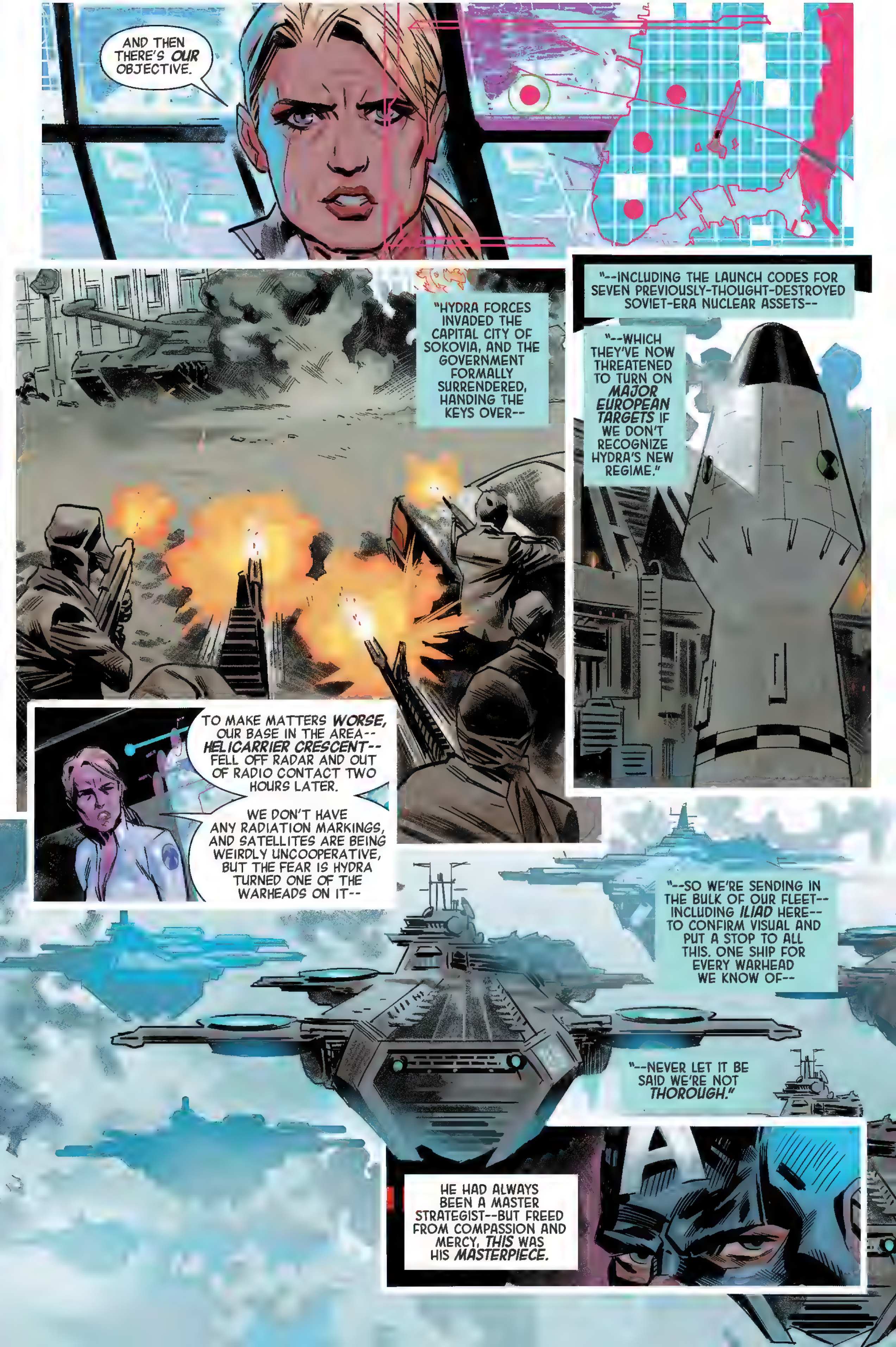

HE WAS THE GREATEST AMONG US.
THE ONE WE LOOKED TO, TO LEAD US AND TO GUIDE US.
WE WERE *WRONG.*
WE'D LOST OUR WAY. MIRED IN CORRUPTION AND A THIRST FOR POWER, DIVIDED BY INFIGHTING, WE'D FORGOTTEN OUR CALLING.
AND IN THAT MOMENT, AT OUR WEAKEST, INSTEAD OF CHALLENGING OURSELVES, INSTEAD OF MAKING THINGS RIGHT--
--WE SIMPLY GAVE HIM MORE POWER AND MORE AUTHORITY. IT WAS EASIER TO LET HIM DO THAT WHICH WE WERE TOO WEAK TO DO OURSELVES--
--AND *THIS* IS THE PRICE WE PAID.
STEVE--

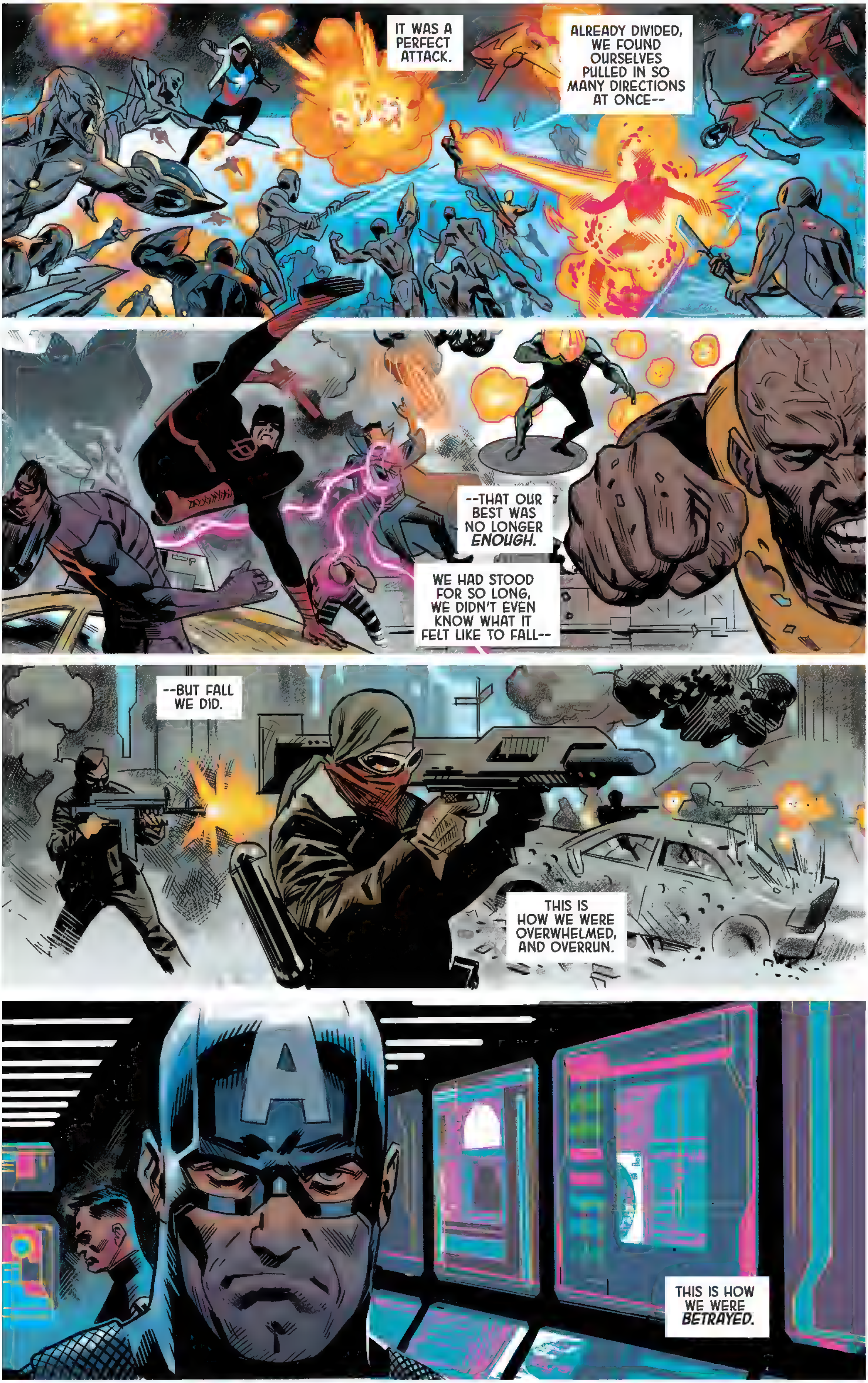

--ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
SORRY, SHARON, JUST... THINKING.
I DON'T BLAME YOU--THIS IS PRETTY OVERWHELMING. I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S WORSE--THAT I'M LOOKING AT THREE BLINKING RED DOTS ON THE TROUBLE MAP--
--OR THAT ALL THREE ARE THINGS WE'VE SEEN COMING FOR MONTHS AND STILL COULDN'T FIND THE WILL TO STOP.
I'VE SEEN BAD BEFORE, BUT--THIS FEELS DIFFERENT. THIS FEELS LIKE THE END.
NO--
--THIS IS NOT HOW THE WORLD ENDS.
LET'S TAKE THEM ONE AT A TIME.
RIGHT. THE CHITAURI INVASION FLEET HAS FINALLY ARRIVED--TRILLIONS OF THEM. EXPERTS ARE TELLING US THEY COULD ELIMINATE 90 PERCENT OF THE EARTH'S POPULATION WITHIN FOUR HOURS IF THEY MAKE LANDFALL.
AND TO MAKE MATTERS WORSE, OUR BEST SOLUTION--THE PLANETARY DEFENSE SHIELD--WAS TAKEN OUT AT ITS MAIN STATION BY A HYDRA SUICIDE BOMBER HOURS AGO. WE'RE TRYING TO FIGURE OUT THE CONNECTION THERE.
BUT WE HAVE AN ANSWER. CAPTAIN MARVEL--HOW ARE THINGS IN THE STARS?
WELL, IF THIS IS A SUICIDE MISSION, I'M HAPPY TO REPORT WE'RE DOING IT THE RIGHT WAY--

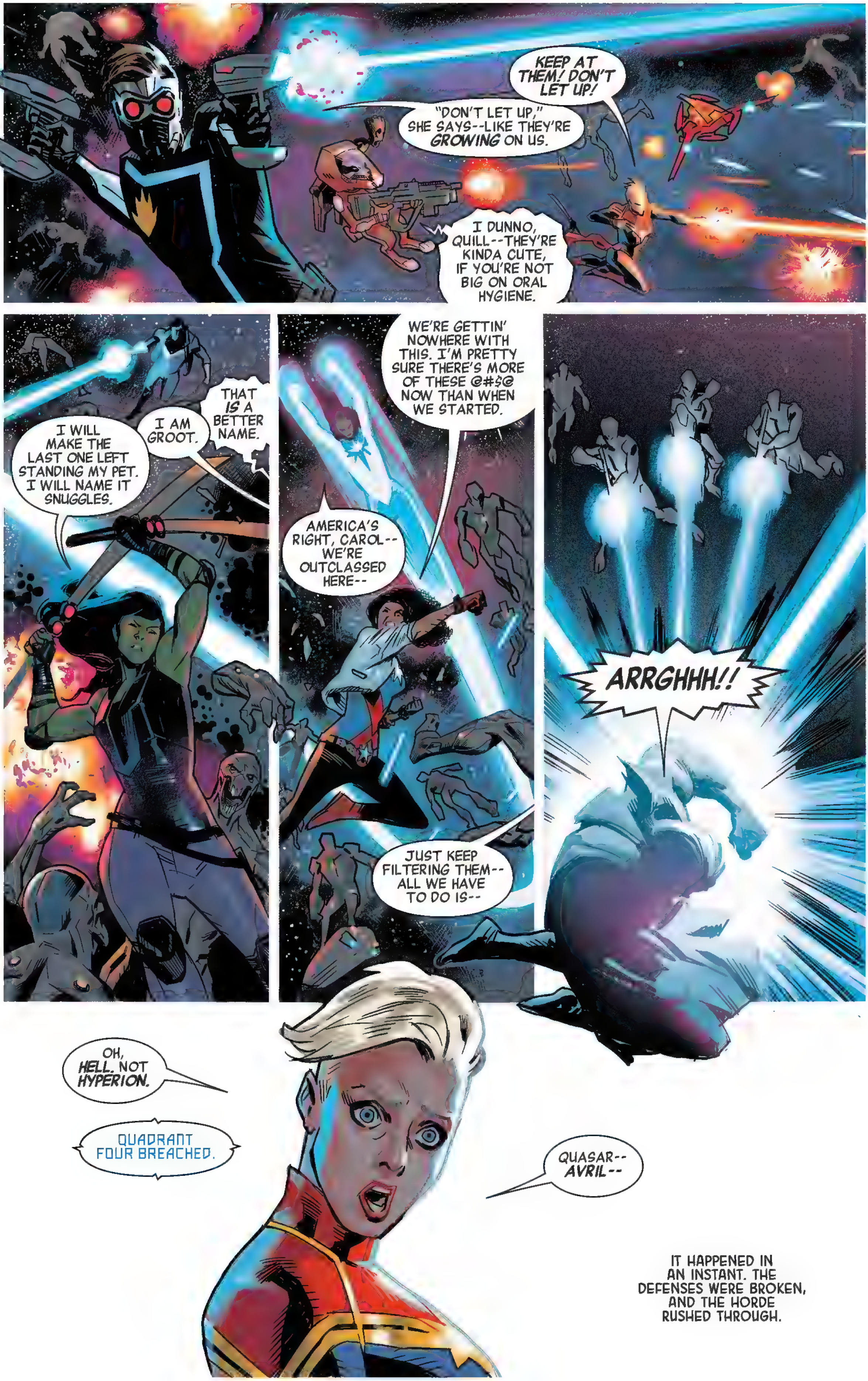

DIE WITH YOUR BOOTS ON, PEOPLE!
THERE'S TOO MANY OF THESE DAMN THINGS, CAP--WE'RE NOT GONNA BE ABLE TO HOLD THEM BACK FOR LONG.
WE'RE JUST TRYING TO CORRAL THEM FOR NOW--FUNNEL THEM WHERE WE WANT THEM TO GO--
"--LET QUASAR TAKE CARE OF THE REST.
"AS A STOPGAP, SHE'S PRETTY AMAZING, BUT SHE CAN ONLY KILL AS FAR AS SHE CAN SEE, AND THESE THINGS STRETCH BACK FOR PLANETS."
I SURE COULD USE A GIANT IMPENETRABLE FORCE-FIELD SURROUNDING THE EARTH ABOUT NOW...
I HEAR YOU, CAROL. JUST HOLD TIGHT. YOU'LL BE HAPPY TO KNOW--

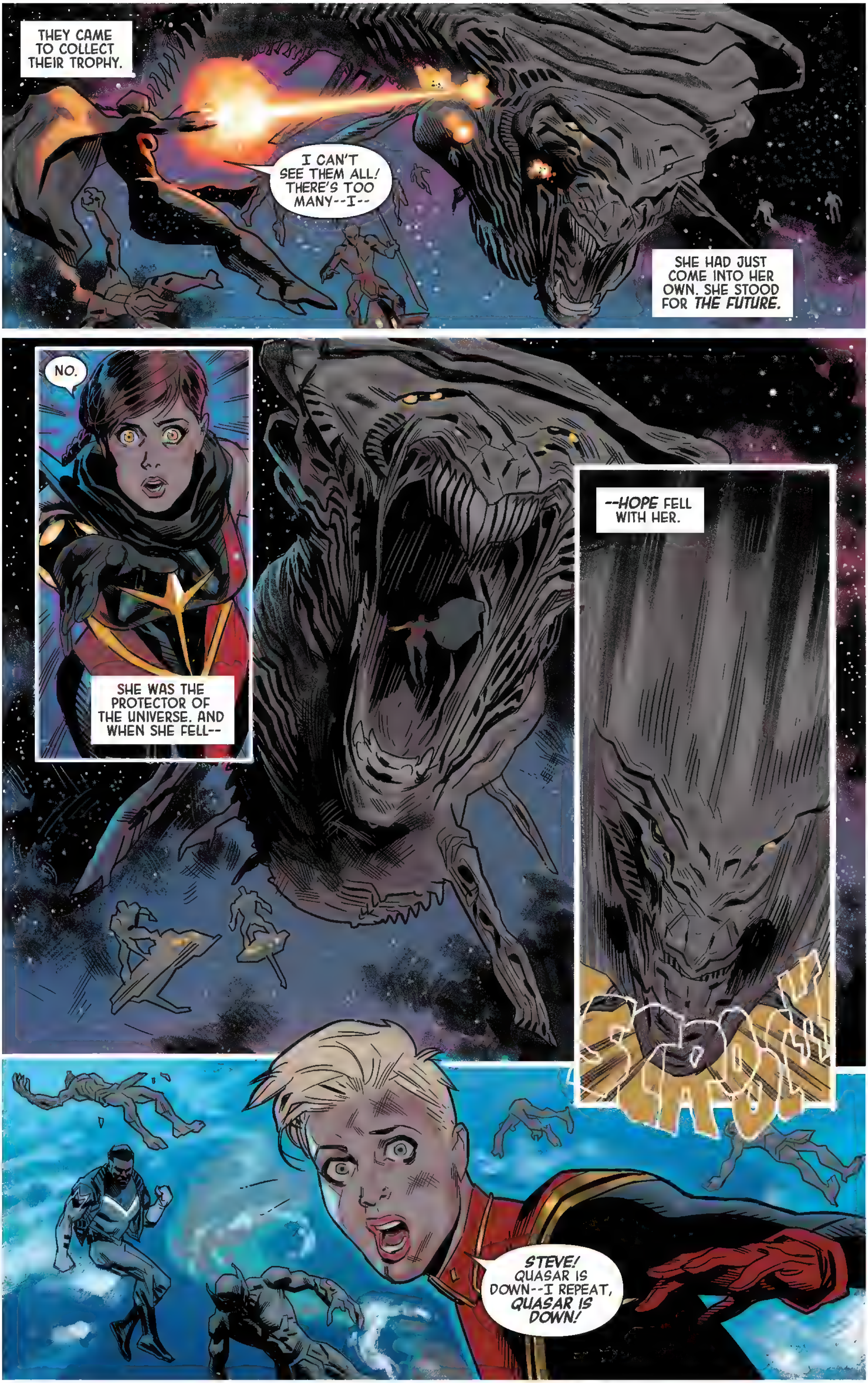

"--I'VE GOT TWO OF OUR *BEST PEOPLE* ON IT."
TONY, RIRI, HOW ARE WE DOING DOWN THERE?
WELL, I CAN TELL YOU THAT **NOTHING** IS COLOR-CODED PROPERLY. BEYOND THAT? IT'S GOVERNMENT WORK, SO I CAN'T BE SURE HOW MUCH IS DAMAGE FROM THE BOMBING AND HOW MUCH IS DUE TO **SHODDY CONTRACTS.**
WE'LL GET IT UP AND RUNNING, SIR. HE'S JUST BEING--
*--HIM.* TRUST ME, I KNOW, MS. WILLIAMS. BETTER THAN ANYONE.
WE'RE IN GOOD HANDS THERE. LET'S LOOK AT THE NEXT PROBLEM--
RIGHT--
"*--NEW YORK IS BURNING.*"
LESS THAN AN HOUR AGO, AN ARMY OF SUPER-POWERED CRIMINALS SWARMED ONTO THE STREETS OF MIDTOWN. DOZENS OF THEM, WITH ONE THING IN COMMON--
--THEY WERE ***ALL*** INMATES IN MARIA HILL'S LITTLE REALITY-WARP COSMIC CUBE PRISON...

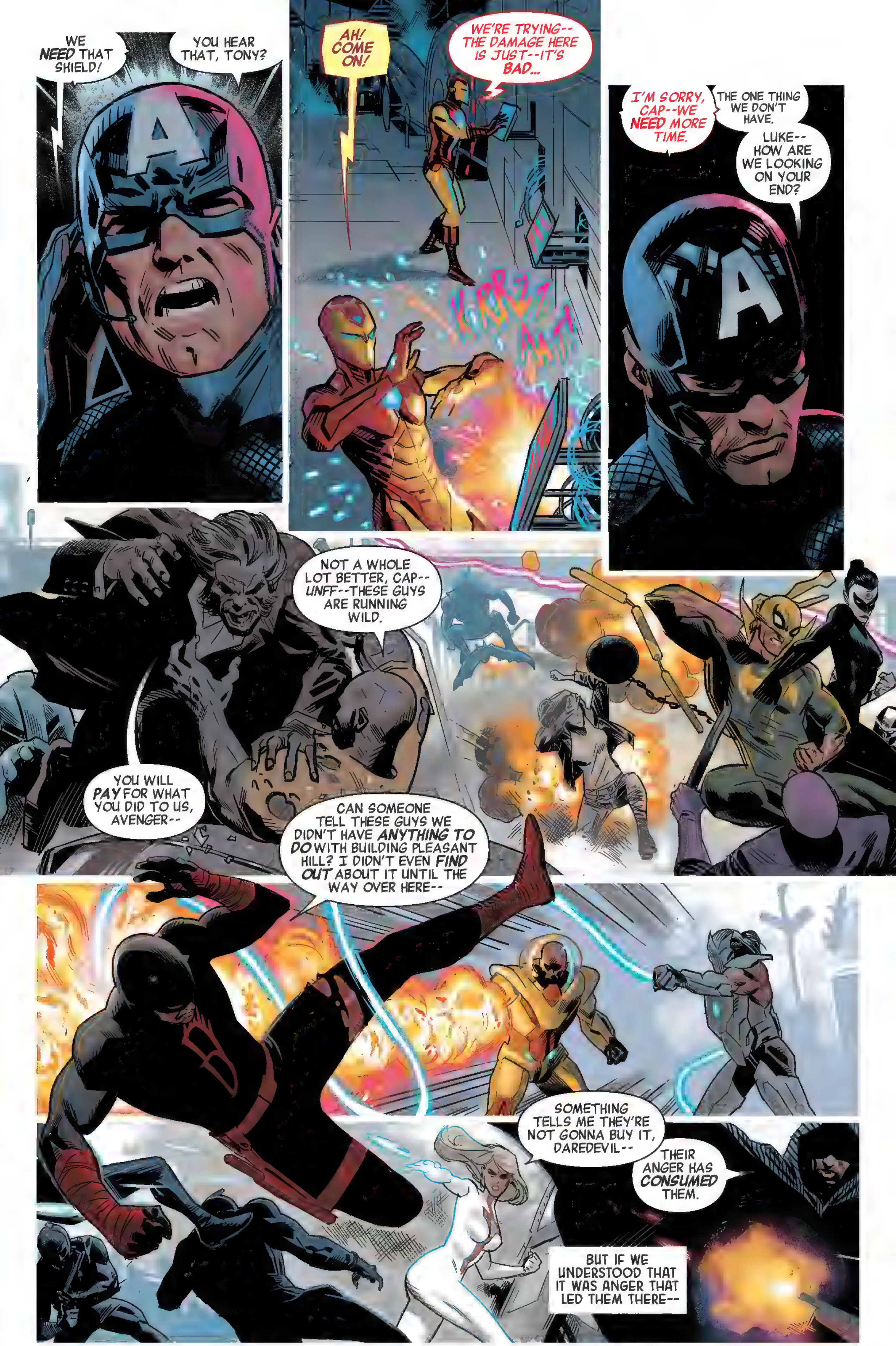

"...PLEASANT HILL."
CITIZENS OF NEW YORK! I AM GRAVITON, AND YOU HAVE BEEN LIED TO.
S.H.I.E.L.D., YOUR SO-CALLED **PROTECTORS**, WHO **CLAIM** TO BE ON THE SIDE OF GOOD, HAVE COMMITTED AN **UNCONSCIONABLE** CRIME.
THEY CREATED A **SECRET PRISON**, WHERE OUR INALIENABLE HUMAN RIGHTS WERE **TRAMPLED** UPON--WHERE THEY FORCIBLY REWROTE OUR LIVES AND TOOK OUR FREE WILL--
--AND WHEN IT ALL CAME CRASHING DOWN, INSTEAD OF ADMITTING WHAT THEY HAD DONE--THEY SOUGHT TO HIDE THE TRUTH FROM YOU--FROM ALL OF **US!**
KNOW THAT IT IS THEIR SINS YOU DIE FOR NOW!
WE'RE MOBILIZING RESPONSES IN WAVES.
AND THE FIRST ONE IS ALREADY IN THE FIELD.
ALL RIGHT, LET'S DO THIS, DEFENDERS! SHOW THESE SUCKERS WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THEY MESS WITH OUR CITY!
WHICH THEY DO ALL THE TIME.
BUT THEY SHOULD STOP.

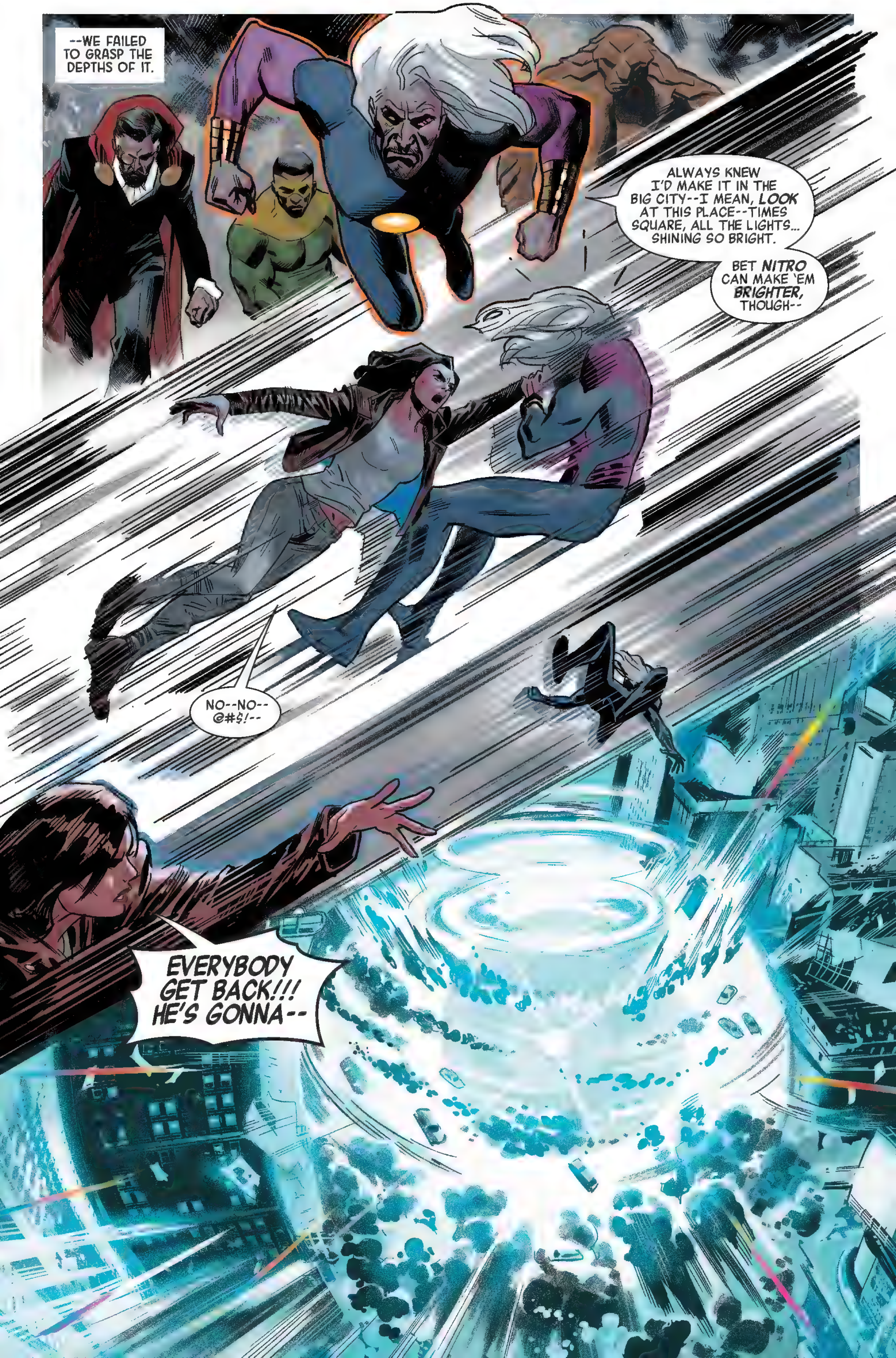

AND THEN THERE'S *OUR* OBJECTIVE.
"HYDRA FORCES INVADED THE CAPITAL CITY OF SOKOVIA, AND THE GOVERNMENT FORMALLY SURRENDERED, HANDING THE KEYS OVER--
"--INCLUDING THE LAUNCH CODES FOR SEVEN PREVIOUSLY-THOUGHT-DESTROYED SOVIET-ERA NUCLEAR ASSETS--
"--WHICH THEY'VE NOW THREATENED TO TURN ON ***MAJOR EUROPEAN TARGETS*** IF WE DON'T RECOGNIZE HYDRA'S NEW REGIME."
TO MAKE MATTERS ***WORSE,*** OUR BASE IN THE AREA-- ***HELICARRIER CRESCENT--*** FELL OFF RADAR AND OUT OF RADIO CONTACT TWO HOURS LATER.
WE DON'T HAVE ANY RADIATION MARKINGS, AND SATELLITES ARE BEING WEIRDLY UNCOOPERATIVE, BUT THE FEAR IS HYDRA TURNED ONE OF THE WARHEADS ON IT--
"--SO WE'RE SENDING IN THE BULK OF OUR FLEET-- INCLUDING ***ILIAD*** HERE-- TO CONFIRM VISUAL AND PUT A STOP TO ALL THIS. ONE SHIP FOR EVERY WARHEAD WE KNOW OF--
"--NEVER LET IT BE SAID WE'RE NOT ***THOROUGH.***"
HE HAD ALWAYS BEEN A MASTER STRATEGIST--BUT FREED FROM COMPASSION AND MERCY, ***THIS*** WAS HIS ***MASTERPIECE.***

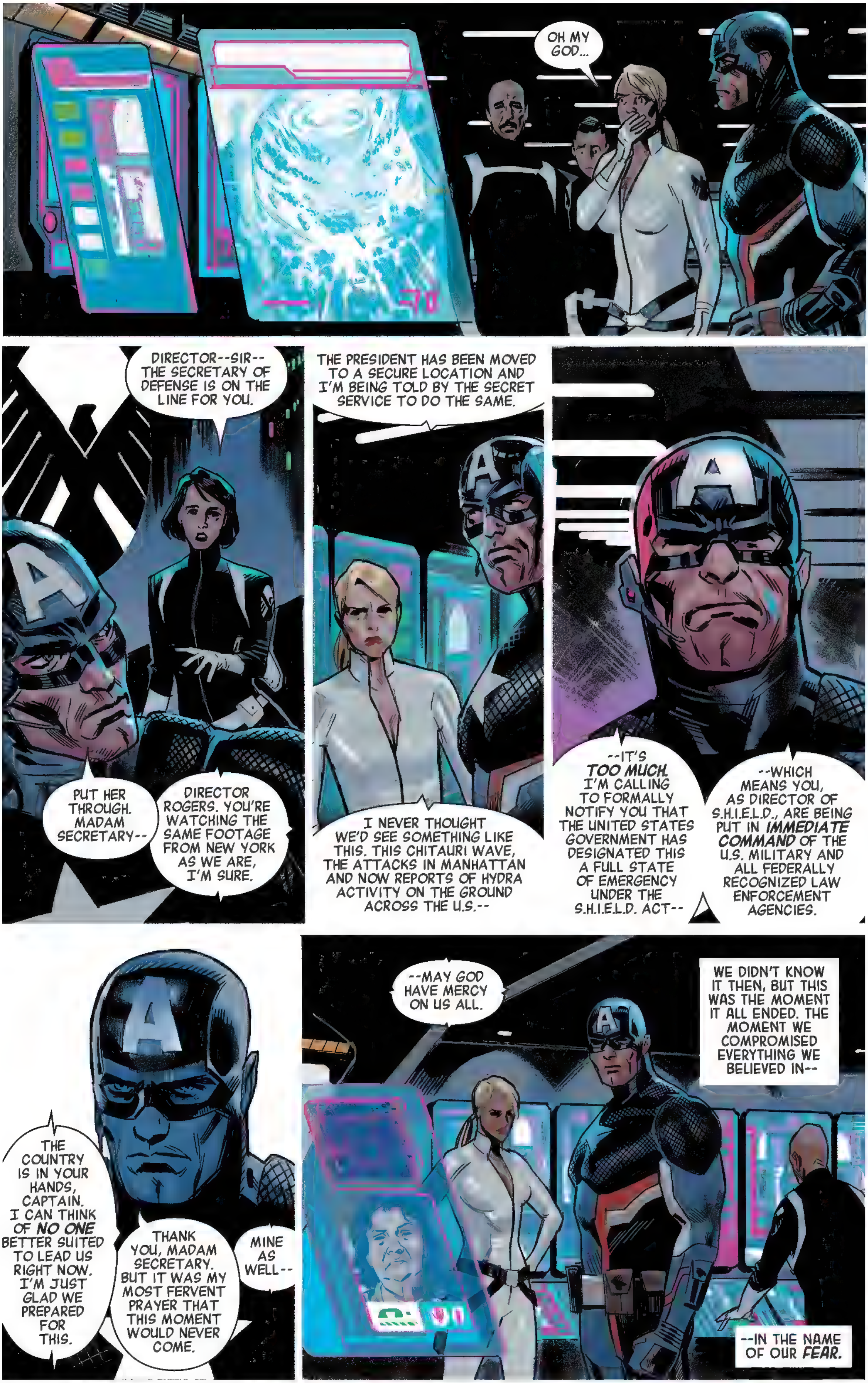

IT WAS A PERFECT ATTACK.
ALREADY DIVIDED, WE FOUND OURSELVES PULLED IN SO MANY DIRECTIONS AT ONCE--
--THAT OUR BEST WAS NO LONGER *ENOUGH.*
WE HAD STOOD FOR SO LONG, WE DIDN'T EVEN KNOW WHAT IT FELT LIKE TO FALL--
--BUT FALL WE DID.
THIS IS HOW WE WERE OVERWHELMED, AND OVERRUN.
THIS IS HOW WE WERE *BETRAYED.*

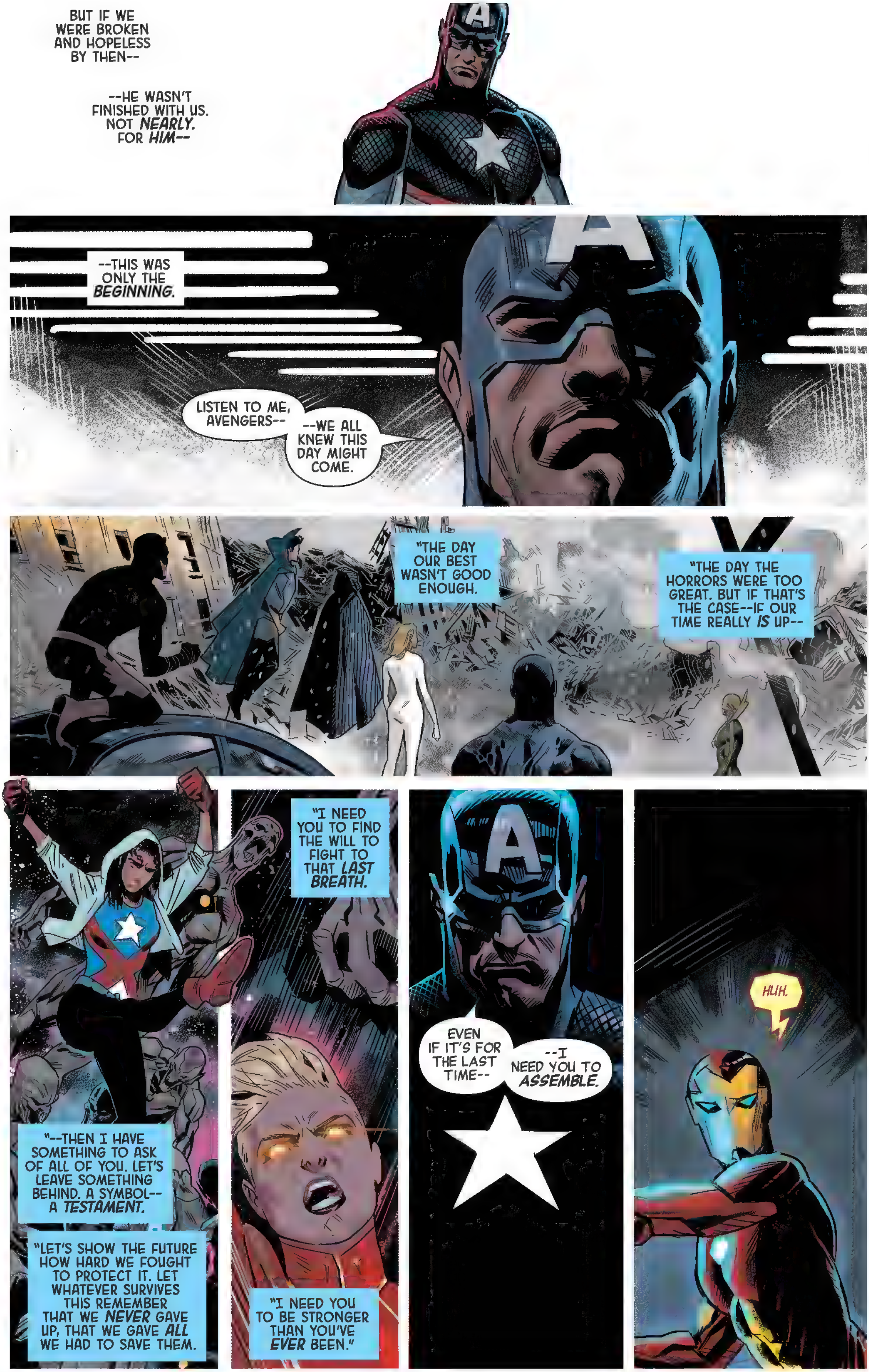

KEEP AT THEM! DON'T LET UP!
"DON'T LET UP," SHE SAYS--LIKE THEY'RE GROWING ON US.
I DUNNO, QUILL--THEY'RE KINDA CUTE, IF YOU'RE NOT BIG ON ORAL HYGIENE.
I WILL MAKE THE LAST ONE LEFT STANDING MY PET. I WILL NAME IT SNUGGLES.
I AM GROOT.
THAT IS A BETTER NAME.
WE'RE GETTIN' NOWHERE WITH THIS. I'M PRETTY SURE THERE'S MORE OF THESE @#$@ NOW THAN WHEN WE STARTED.
AMERICA'S RIGHT, CAROL--WE'RE OUTCLASSED HERE--
JUST KEEP FILTERING THEM--ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS--
ARRGHHH!!
OH, HELL. NOT HYPERION.
QUADRANT FOUR BREACHED.
QUASAR--AVRIL--
IT HAPPENED IN AN INSTANT. THE DEFENSES WERE BROKEN, AND THE HORDE RUSHED THROUGH.

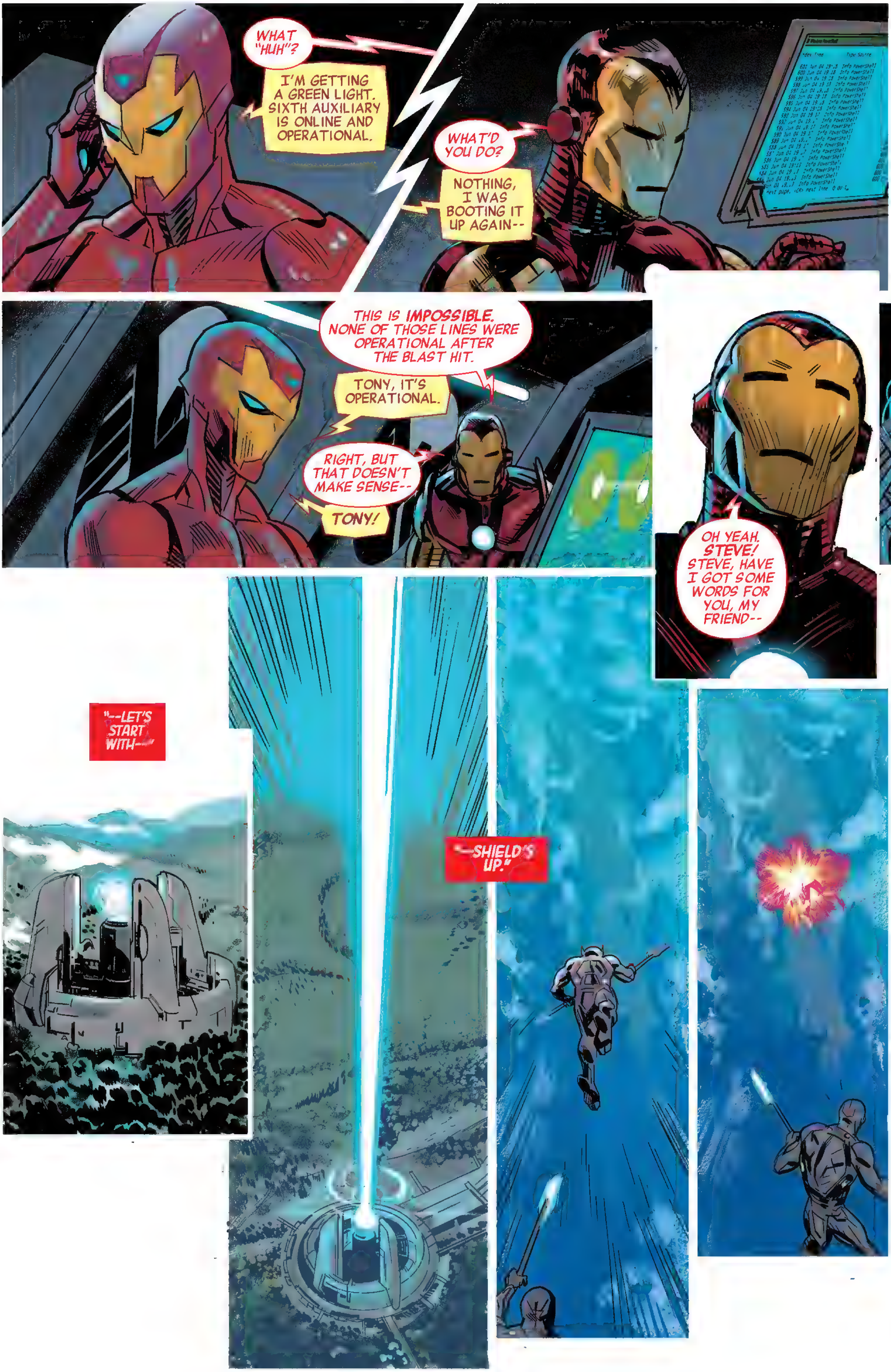

THEY CAME TO COLLECT THEIR TROPHY.
I CAN'T SEE THEM ALL! THERE'S TOO MANY--I--
SHE HAD JUST COME INTO HER OWN. SHE STOOD FOR *THE FUTURE.*
NO.
SHE WAS THE PROTECTOR OF THE UNIVERSE. AND WHEN SHE FELL--
--*HOPE* FELL WITH HER.
*STEVE!* QUASAR IS DOWN--I REPEAT, *QUASAR IS DOWN!*

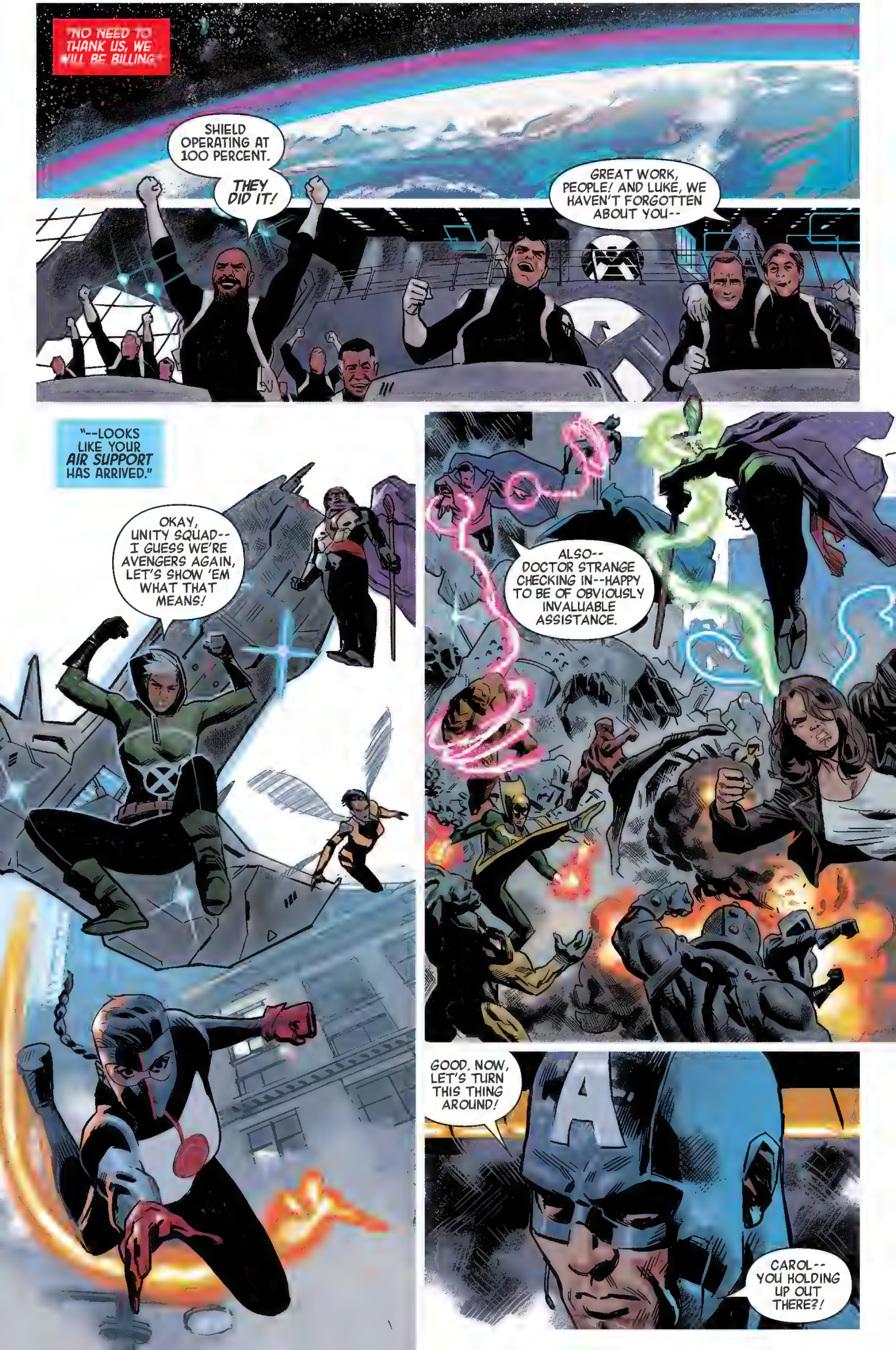

WE *NEED* THAT SHIELD!
YOU HEAR THAT, TONY?
AH! COME ON!
WE'RE TRYING-- THE DAMAGE HERE IS JUST--IT'S BAD...
KRRZZAAT
I'M SORRY, CAP--WE *NEED* MORE TIME.
THE ONE THING WE DON'T HAVE.
LUKE-- HOW ARE WE LOOKING ON YOUR END?
NOT A WHOLE LOT BETTER, CAP-- *UNFF*--THESE GUYS ARE RUNNING WILD.
YOU WILL *PAY* FOR WHAT YOU DID TO US, AVENGER--
CAN SOMEONE TELL THESE GUYS WE DIDN'T HAVE *ANYTHING TO DO* WITH BUILDING PLEASANT HILL? I DIDN'T EVEN *FIND OUT* ABOUT IT UNTIL THE WAY OVER HERE--
SOMETHING TELLS ME THEY'RE NOT GONNA BUY IT, DAREDEVIL--
THEIR ANGER HAS *CONSUMED* THEM.
BUT IF WE UNDERSTOOD THAT IT WAS ANGER THAT LED THEM THERE--

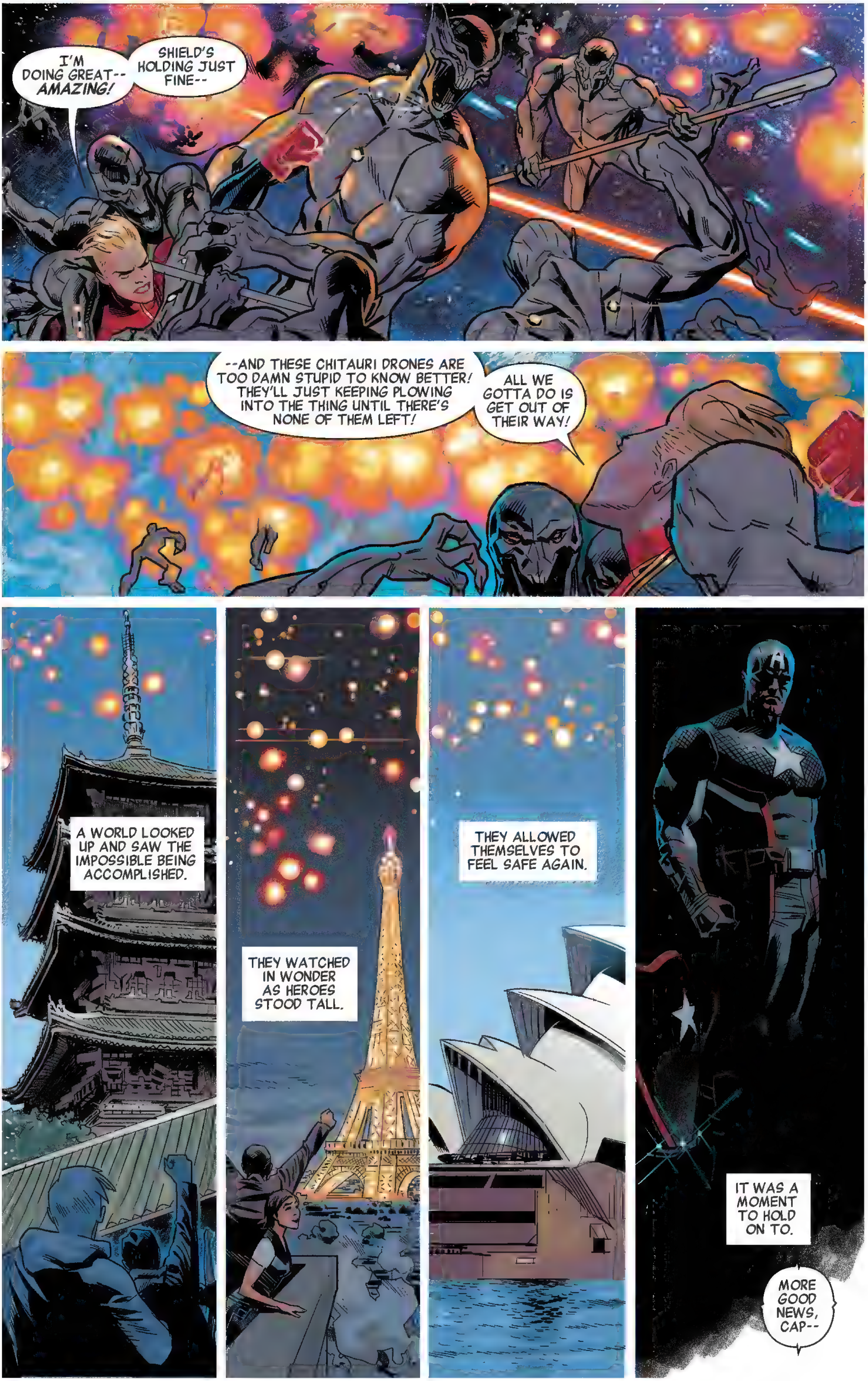

--WE FAILED TO GRASP THE DEPTHS OF IT.
ALWAYS KNEW I'D MAKE IT IN THE BIG CITY--I MEAN, LOOK AT THIS PLACE--TIMES SQUARE, ALL THE LIGHTS... SHINING SO BRIGHT.
BET NITRO CAN MAKE 'EM BRIGHTER, THOUGH--
NO--NO-- @#$!--
EVERYBODY GET BACK!!! HE'S GONNA--

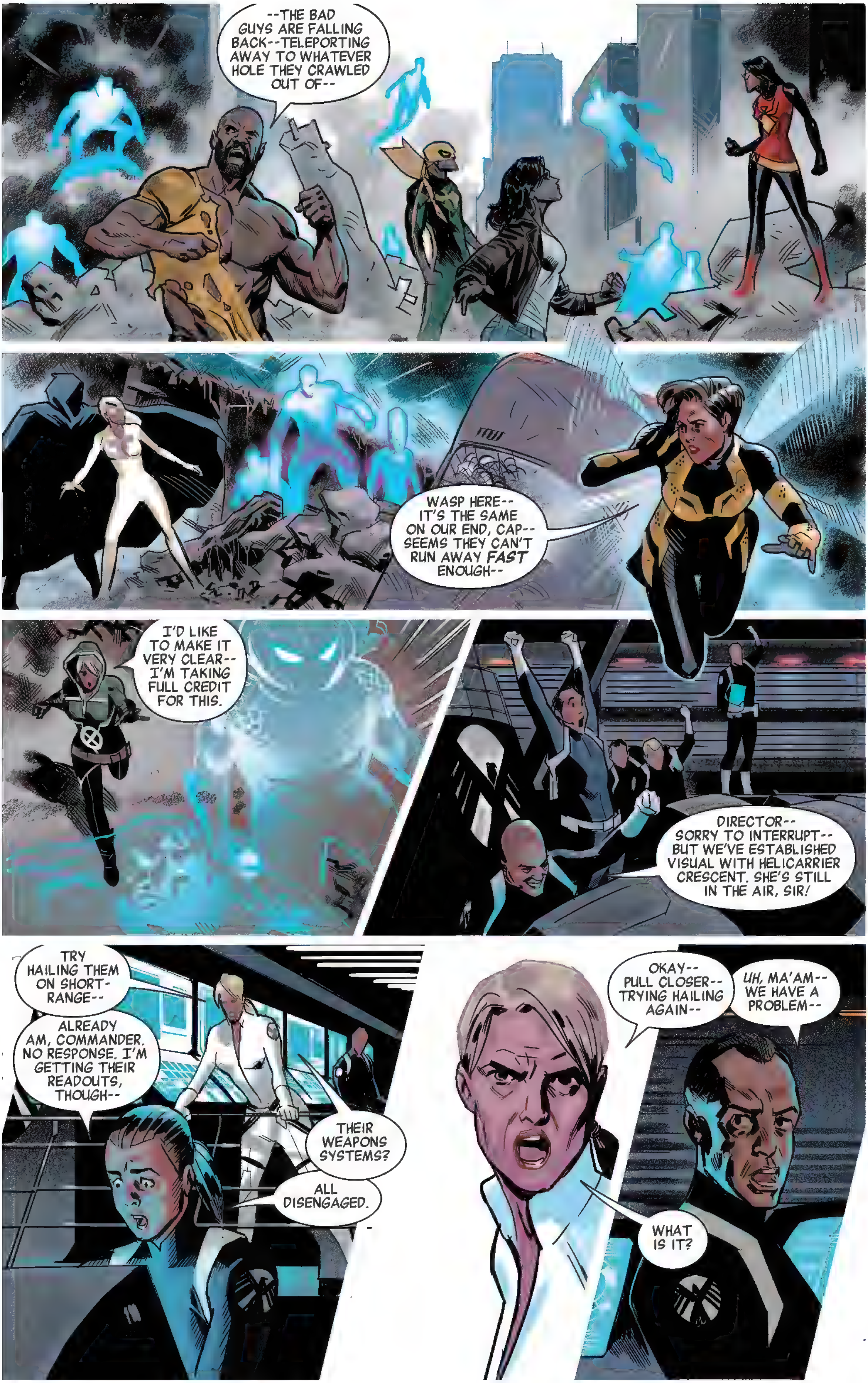

OH MY GOD...
DIRECTOR--SIR--THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE IS ON THE LINE FOR YOU.
PUT HER THROUGH. MADAM SECRETARY--
DIRECTOR ROGERS. YOU'RE WATCHING THE SAME FOOTAGE FROM NEW YORK AS WE ARE, I'M SURE.
THE PRESIDENT HAS BEEN MOVED TO A SECURE LOCATION AND I'M BEING TOLD BY THE SECRET SERVICE TO DO THE SAME.
I NEVER THOUGHT WE'D SEE SOMETHING LIKE THIS. THIS CHITAURI WAVE, THE ATTACKS IN MANHATTAN AND NOW REPORTS OF HYDRA ACTIVITY ON THE GROUND ACROSS THE U.S.--
--IT'S *TOO MUCH.* I'M CALLING TO FORMALLY NOTIFY YOU THAT THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT HAS DESIGNATED THIS A FULL STATE OF EMERGENCY UNDER THE S.H.I.E.L.D. ACT--
--WHICH MEANS YOU, AS DIRECTOR OF S.H.I.E.L.D., ARE BEING PUT IN *IMMEDIATE COMMAND* OF THE U.S. MILITARY AND ALL FEDERALLY RECOGNIZED LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES.
THE COUNTRY IS IN YOUR HANDS, CAPTAIN. I CAN THINK OF *NO ONE* BETTER SUITED TO LEAD US RIGHT NOW. I'M JUST GLAD WE PREPARED FOR THIS.
THANK YOU, MADAM SECRETARY. BUT IT WAS MY MOST FERVENT PRAYER THAT THIS MOMENT WOULD NEVER COME.
MINE AS WELL--
--MAY GOD HAVE MERCY ON US ALL.
WE DIDN'T KNOW IT THEN, BUT THIS WAS THE MOMENT IT ALL ENDED. THE MOMENT WE COMPROMISED EVERYTHING WE BELIEVED IN--
--IN THE NAME OF OUR *FEAR.*

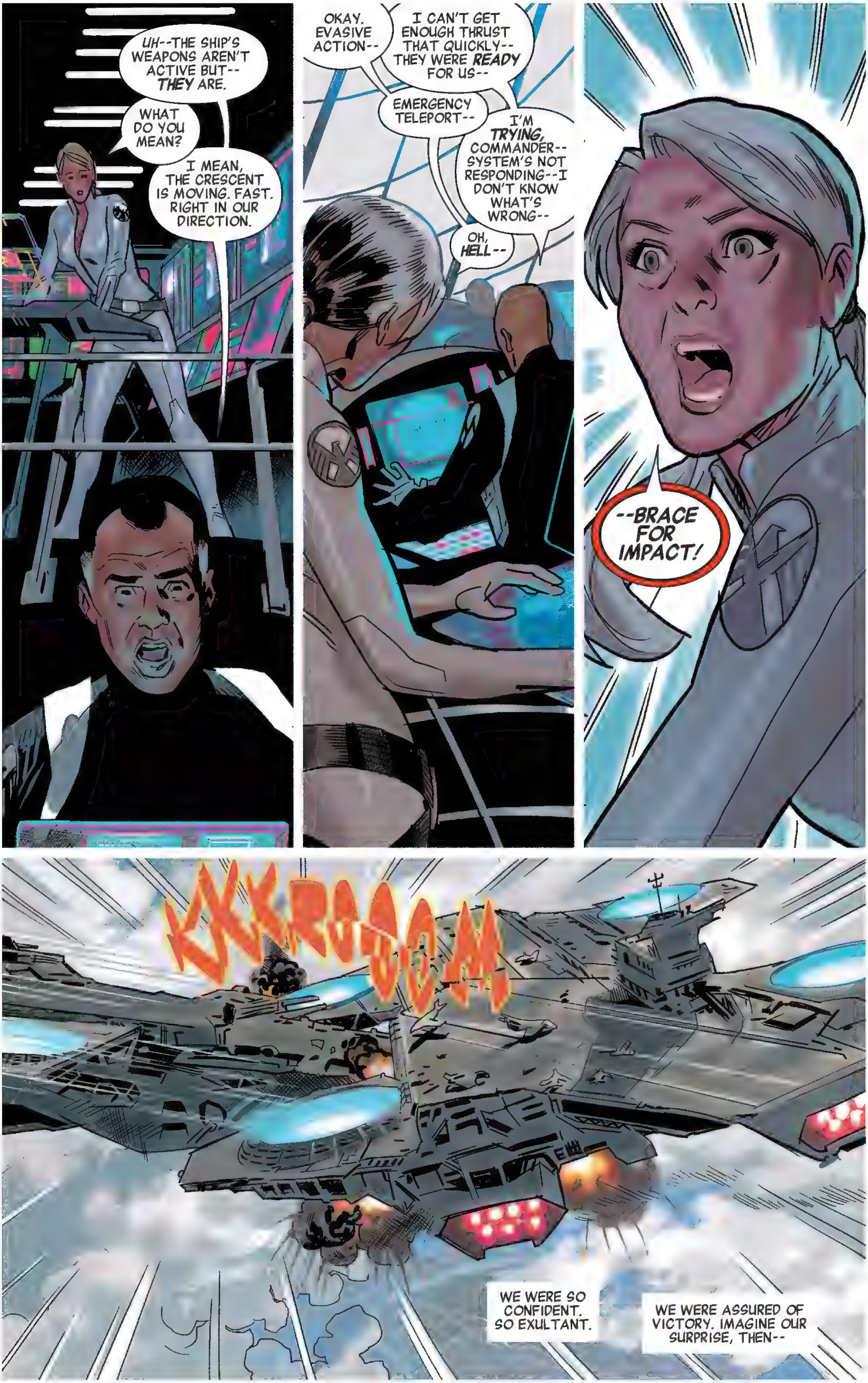

BUT IF WE WERE BROKEN AND HOPELESS BY THEN--
--HE WASN'T FINISHED WITH US. NOT *NEARLY.* FOR *HIM*--
--THIS WAS ONLY THE *BEGINNING.*
LISTEN TO ME, AVENGERS--
--WE ALL KNEW THIS DAY MIGHT COME.
"THE DAY OUR BEST WASN'T GOOD ENOUGH.
"THE DAY THE HORRORS WERE TOO GREAT. BUT IF THAT'S THE CASE--IF OUR TIME REALLY *IS* UP--
"--THEN I HAVE SOMETHING TO ASK OF ALL OF YOU. LET'S LEAVE SOMETHING BEHIND. A SYMBOL-- A *TESTAMENT.*
"LET'S SHOW THE FUTURE HOW HARD WE FOUGHT TO PROTECT IT. LET WHATEVER SURVIVES THIS REMEMBER THAT WE *NEVER* GAVE UP, THAT WE GAVE *ALL* WE HAD TO SAVE THEM.
"I NEED YOU TO FIND THE WILL TO FIGHT TO THAT *LAST BREATH.*
"I NEED YOU TO BE STRONGER THAN YOU'VE *EVER* BEEN."
EVEN IF IT'S FOR THE LAST TIME--
--I NEED YOU TO *ASSEMBLE.*
HUH.

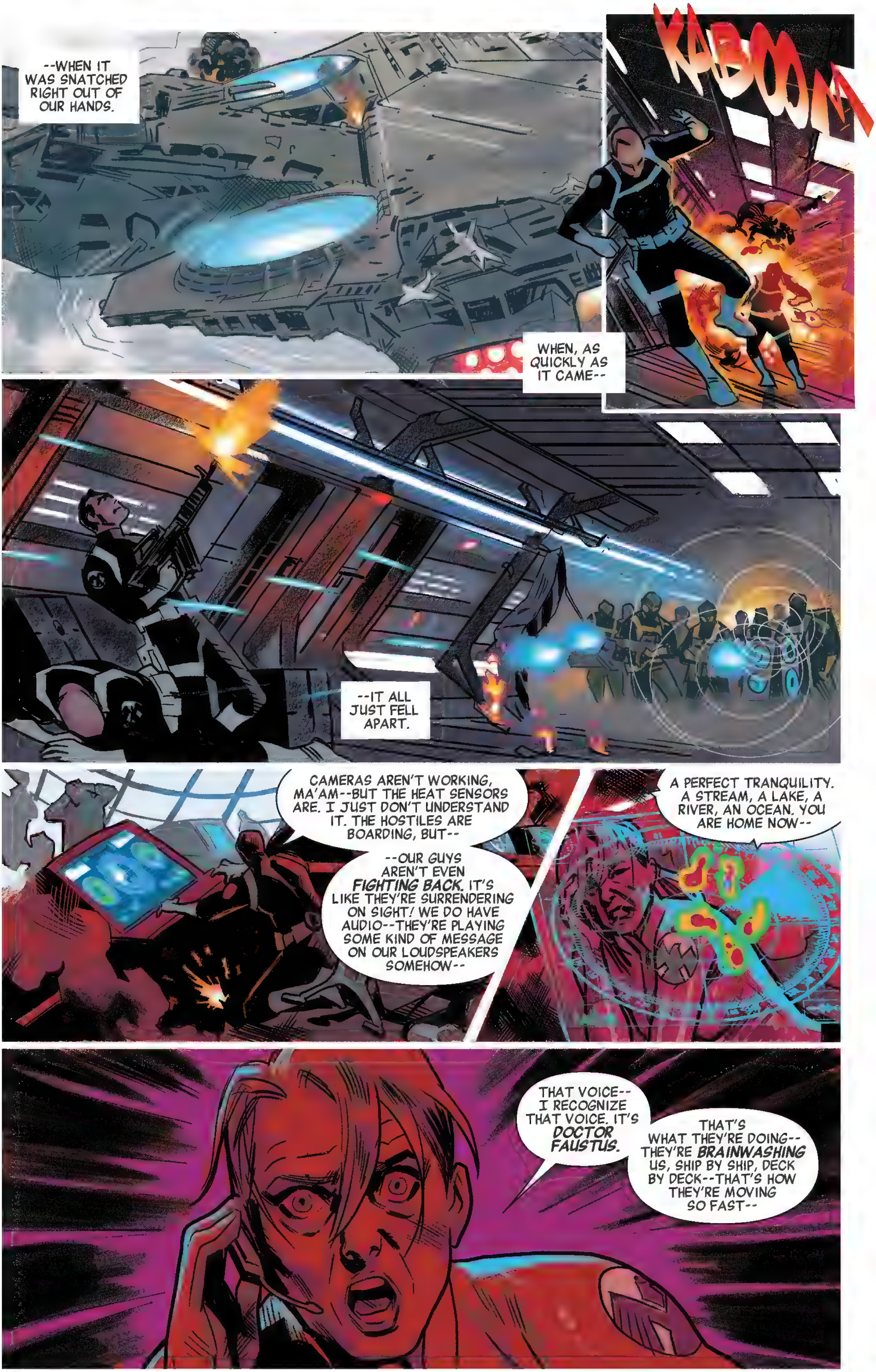

WHAT "HUH"?
I'M GETTING A GREEN LIGHT. SIXTH AUXILIARY IS ONLINE AND OPERATIONAL.
WHAT'D YOU DO?
NOTHING, I WAS BOOTING IT UP AGAIN--
THIS IS IMPOSSIBLE. NONE OF THOSE LINES WERE OPERATIONAL AFTER THE BLAST HIT.
TONY, IT'S OPERATIONAL.
RIGHT, BUT THAT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE--
TONY!
OH YEAH. STEVE! STEVE, HAVE I GOT SOME WORDS FOR YOU, MY FRIEND--
"--LET'S START WITH--"
"--SHIELD'S UP."

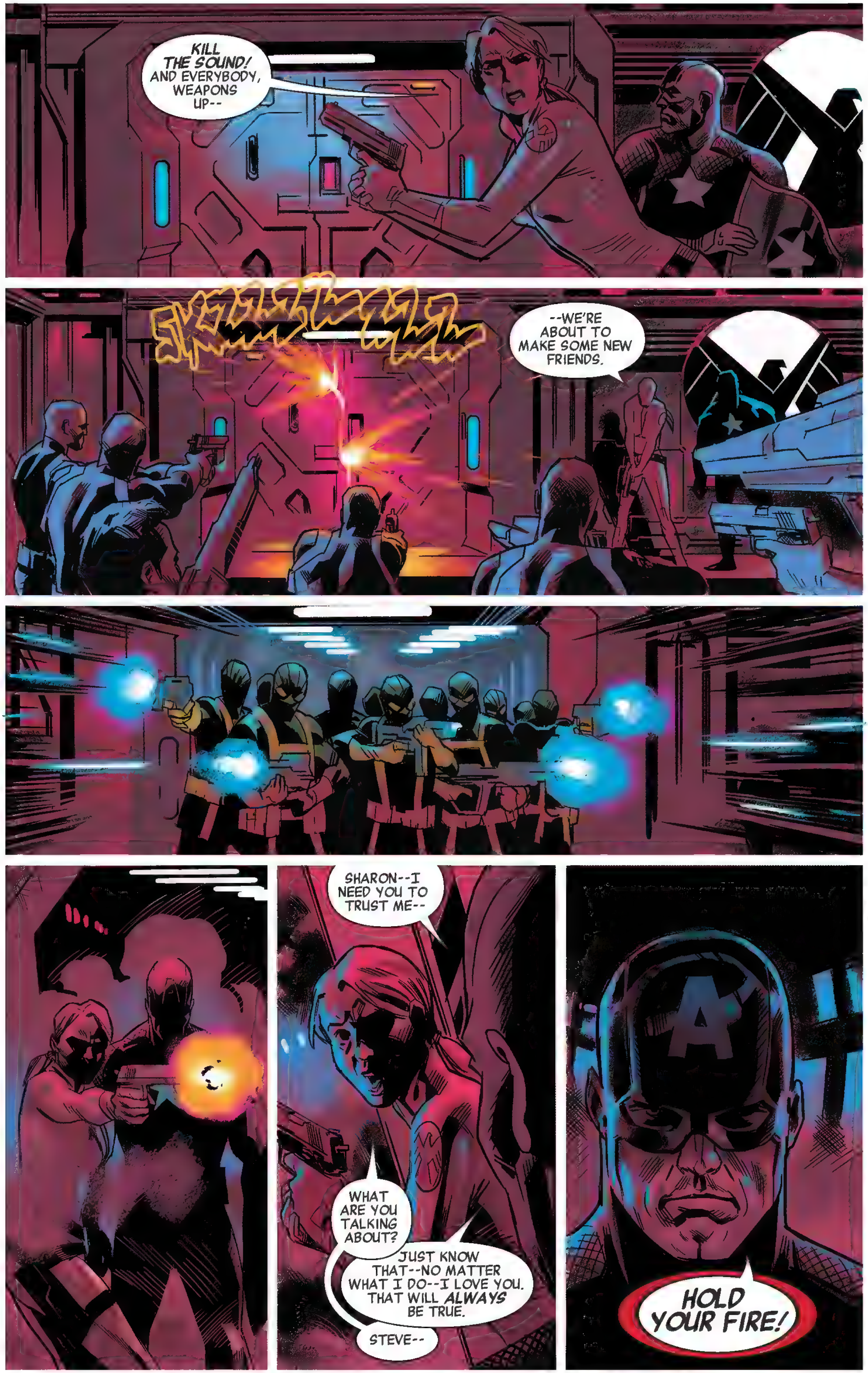

"NO NEED TO THANK US, WE WILL BE BILLING."
SHIELD OPERATING AT 100 PERCENT.
THEY DID IT!
GREAT WORK, PEOPLE! AND LUKE, WE HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN ABOUT YOU--
"--LOOKS LIKE YOUR AIR SUPPORT HAS ARRIVED."
OKAY, UNITY SQUAD-- I GUESS WE'RE AVENGERS AGAIN, LET'S SHOW 'EM WHAT THAT MEANS!
ALSO-- DOCTOR STRANGE CHECKING IN--HAPPY TO BE OF OBVIOUSLY INVALUABLE ASSISTANCE.
GOOD. NOW, LET'S TURN THIS THING AROUND!
CAROL-- YOU HOLDING UP OUT THERE?!

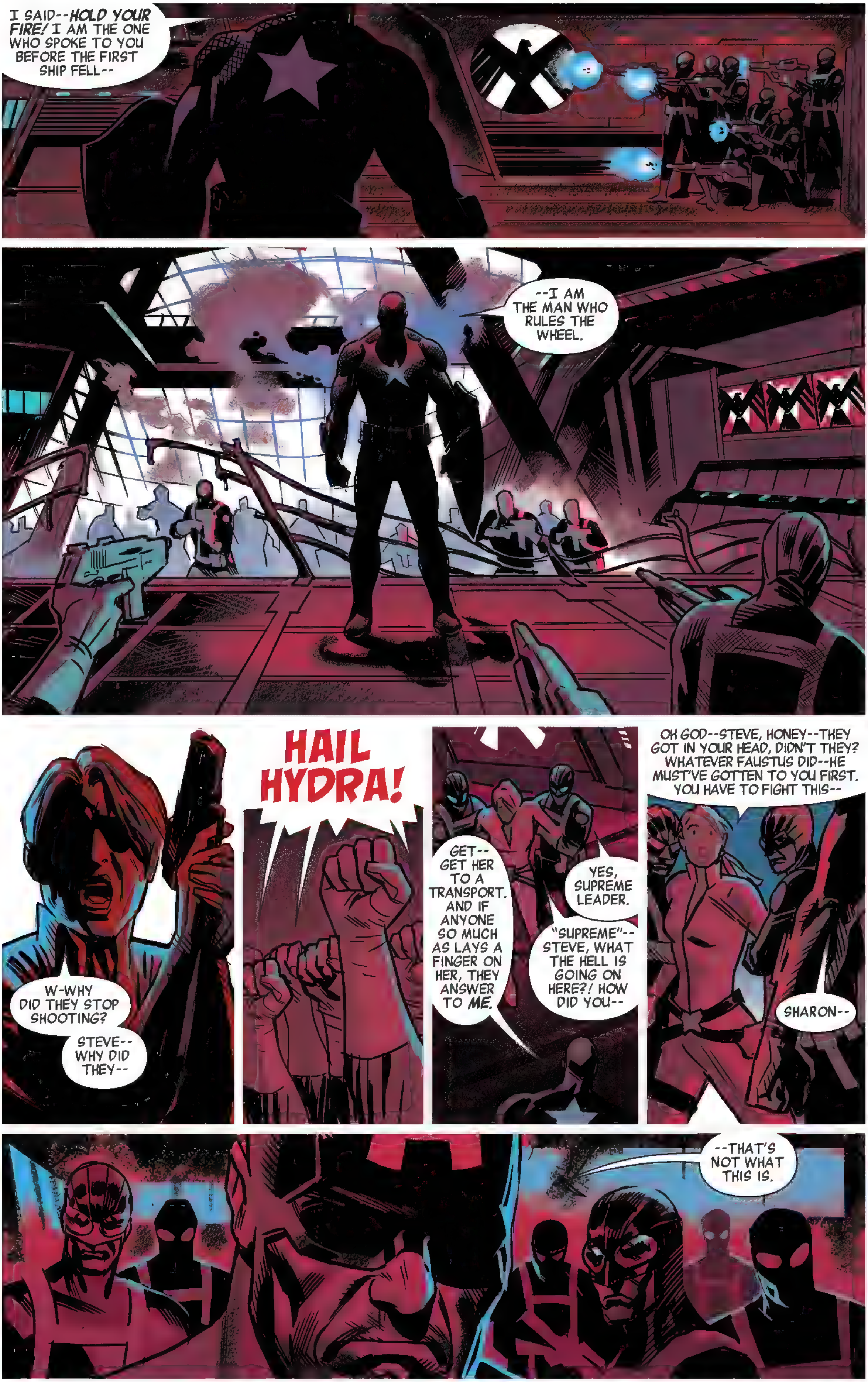

I'M DOING GREAT-- *AMAZING!*
SHIELD'S HOLDING JUST FINE--
--AND THESE CHITAURI DRONES ARE TOO DAMN STUPID TO KNOW BETTER! THEY'LL JUST KEEPING PLOWING INTO THE THING UNTIL THERE'S NONE OF THEM LEFT!
ALL WE GOTTA DO IS GET OUT OF THEIR WAY!
A WORLD LOOKED UP AND SAW THE IMPOSSIBLE BEING ACCOMPLISHED.
THEY WATCHED IN WONDER AS HEROES STOOD TALL.
THEY ALLOWED THEMSELVES TO FEEL SAFE AGAIN.
IT WAS A MOMENT TO HOLD ON TO.
MORE GOOD NEWS, CAP--

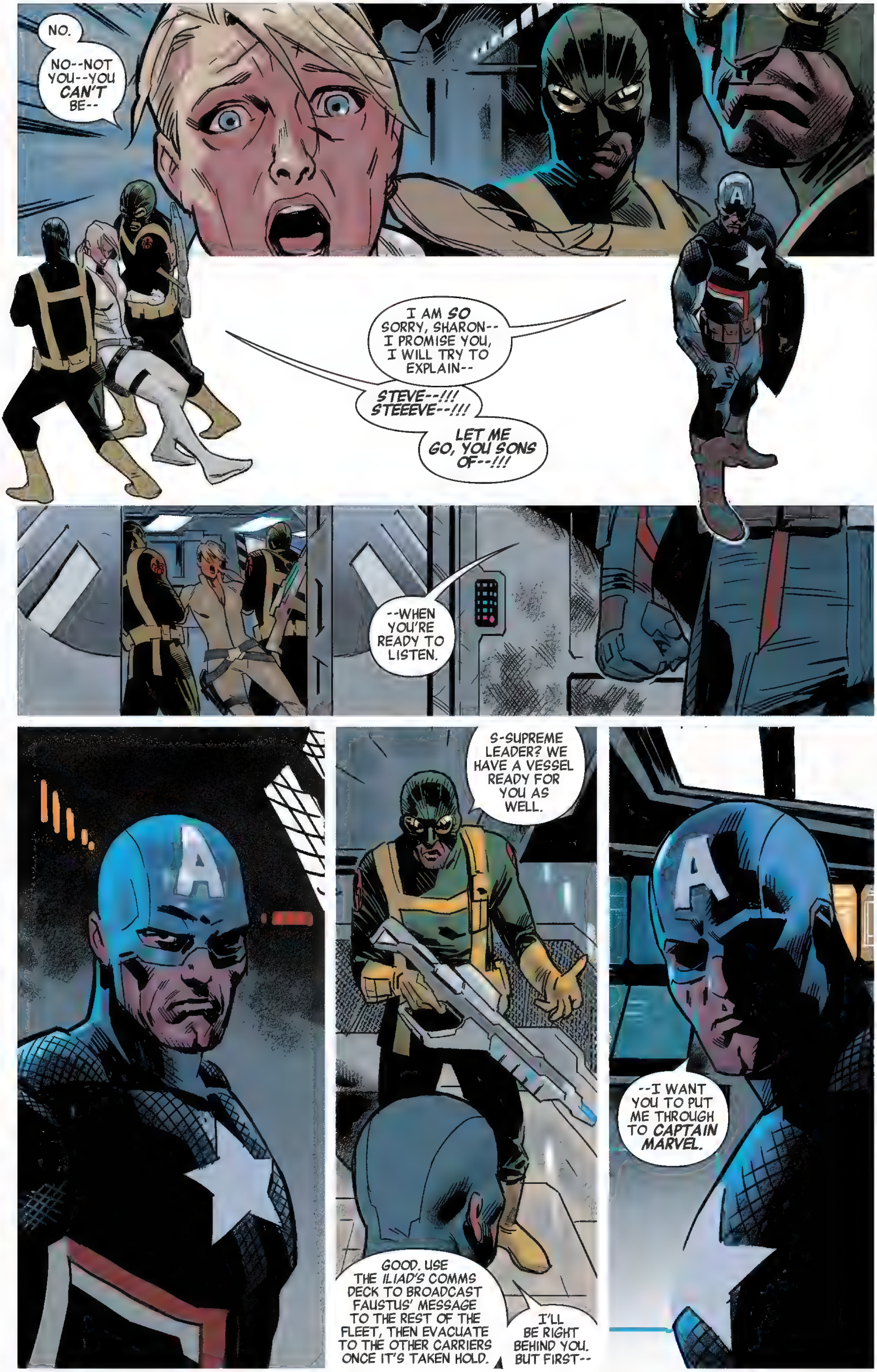

--THE BAD GUYS ARE FALLING BACK--TELEPORTING AWAY TO WHATEVER HOLE THEY CRAWLED OUT OF--
WASP HERE--IT'S THE SAME ON OUR END, CAP--SEEMS THEY CAN'T RUN AWAY *FAST* ENOUGH--
I'D LIKE TO MAKE IT VERY CLEAR--I'M TAKING FULL CREDIT FOR THIS.
DIRECTOR--SORRY TO INTERRUPT--BUT WE'VE ESTABLISHED VISUAL WITH HELICARRIER CRESCENT. SHE'S STILL IN THE AIR, SIR!
TRY HAILING THEM ON SHORT-RANGE--
ALREADY AM, COMMANDER. NO RESPONSE. I'M GETTING THEIR READOUTS, THOUGH--
THEIR WEAPONS SYSTEMS?
ALL DISENGAGED.
OKAY--PULL CLOSER--TRYING HAILING AGAIN--
UH, MA'AM--WE HAVE A PROBLEM--
WHAT IS IT?

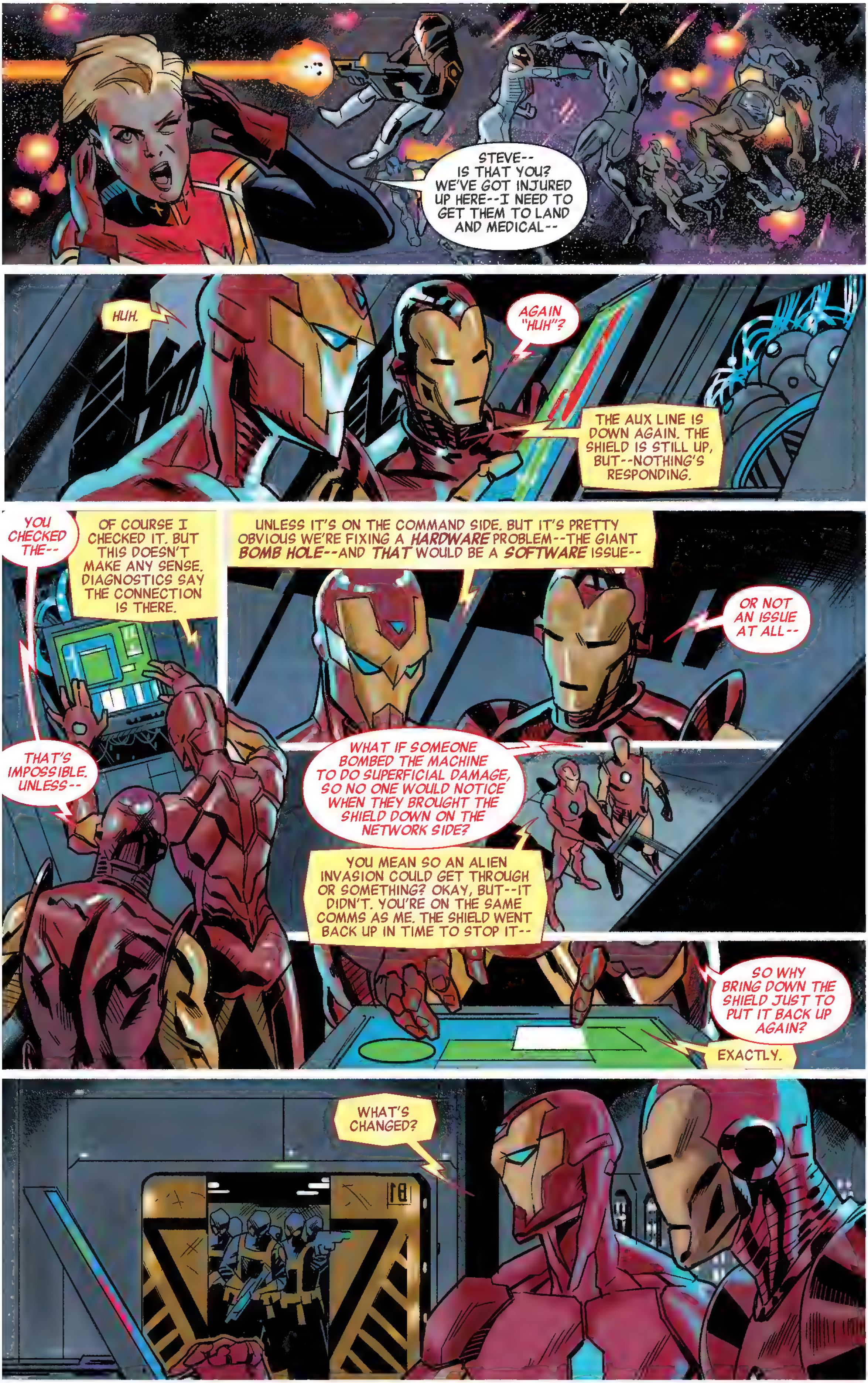

UH--THE SHIP'S WEAPONS AREN'T ACTIVE BUT-- THEY ARE.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
I MEAN, THE CRESCENT IS MOVING. FAST. RIGHT IN OUR DIRECTION.
OKAY. EVASIVE ACTION--
I CAN'T GET ENOUGH THRUST THAT QUICKLY-- THEY WERE READY FOR US--
EMERGENCY TELEPORT--
I'M TRYING, COMMANDER-- SYSTEM'S NOT RESPONDING--I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S WRONG--
OH, HELL--
--BRACE FOR IMPACT!
KKKRGOOOM
WE WERE SO CONFIDENT. SO EXULTANT.
WE WERE ASSURED OF VICTORY. IMAGINE OUR SURPRISE, THEN--

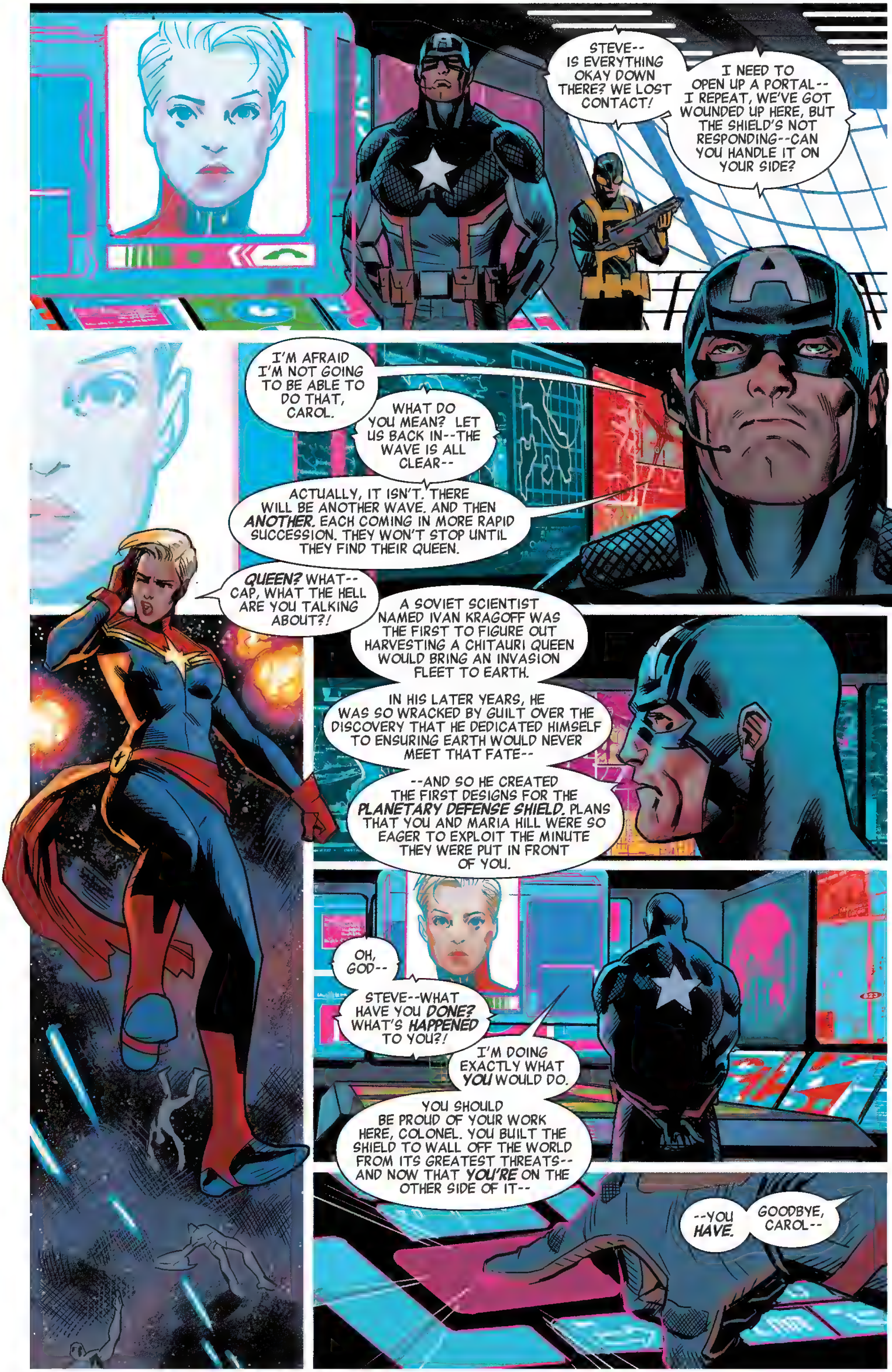

--WHEN IT WAS SNATCHED RIGHT OUT OF OUR HANDS.
KABOOM
WHEN, AS QUICKLY AS IT CAME--
--IT ALL JUST FELL APART.
CAMERAS AREN'T WORKING, MA'AM--BUT THE HEAT SENSORS ARE. I JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND IT. THE HOSTILES ARE BOARDING, BUT--
--OUR GUYS AREN'T EVEN *FIGHTING BACK.* IT'S LIKE THEY'RE SURRENDERING ON SIGHT! WE DO HAVE AUDIO--THEY'RE PLAYING SOME KIND OF MESSAGE ON OUR LOUDSPEAKERS SOMEHOW--
A PERFECT TRANQUILITY. A STREAM, A LAKE, A RIVER, AN OCEAN. YOU ARE HOME NOW--
THAT VOICE--I RECOGNIZE THAT VOICE. IT'S *DOCTOR FAUSTUS.*
THAT'S WHAT THEY'RE DOING--THEY'RE *BRAINWASHING* US, SHIP BY SHIP, DECK BY DECK--THAT'S HOW THEY'RE MOVING SO FAST--

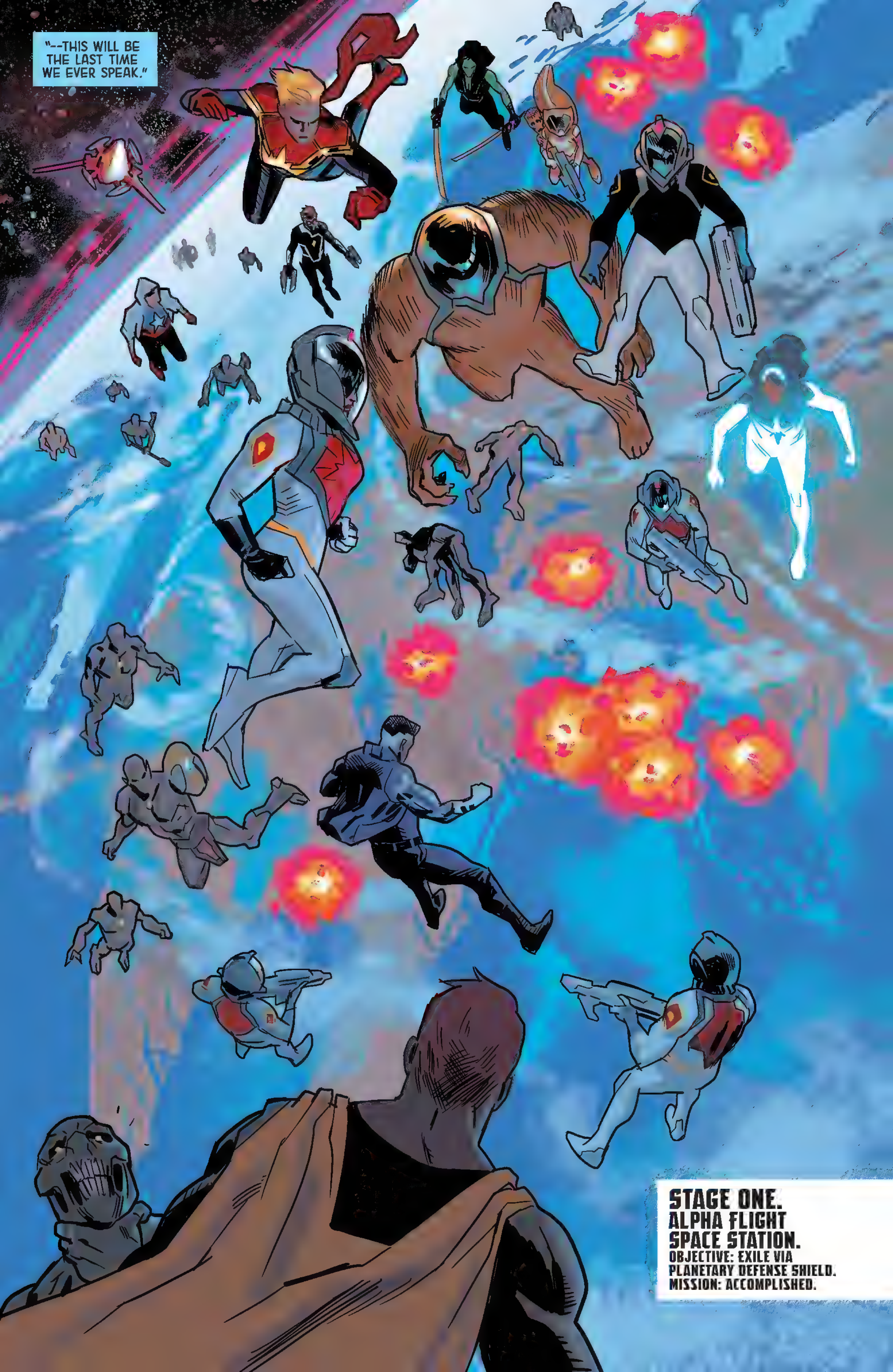

KILL *THE SOUND!* AND EVERYBODY, WEAPONS UP--
--WE'RE ABOUT TO MAKE SOME NEW FRIENDS.
SHARON--I NEED YOU TO TRUST ME--
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
JUST KNOW THAT--NO MATTER WHAT I DO--I LOVE YOU. THAT WILL *ALWAYS* BE TRUE.
STEVE--
HOLD YOUR FIRE!

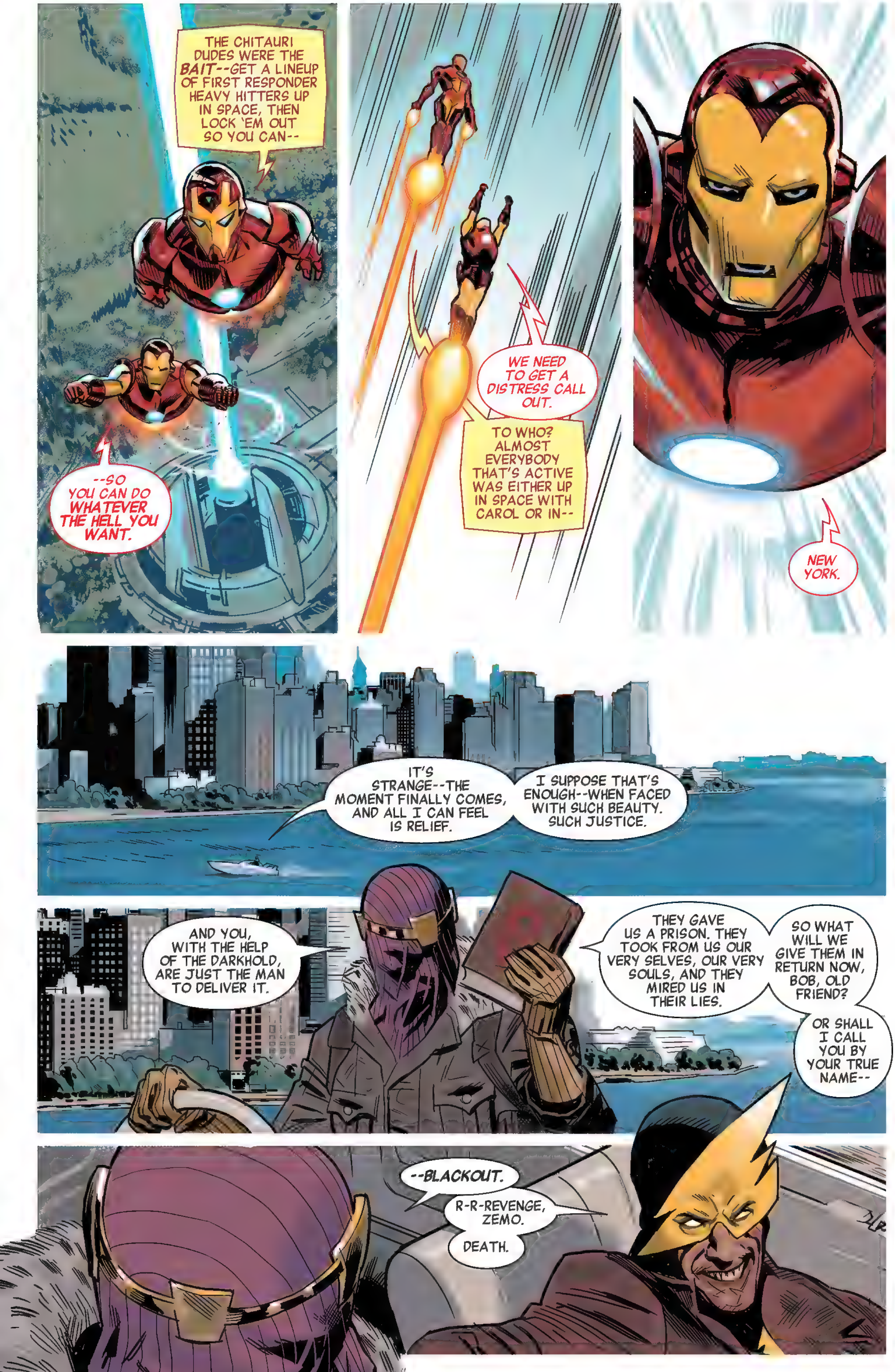

I SAID--*HOLD YOUR FIRE!* I AM THE ONE WHO SPOKE TO YOU BEFORE THE FIRST SHIP FELL--
--I AM THE MAN WHO RULES THE WHEEL.
W-WHY DID THEY STOP SHOOTING?
STEVE-- WHY DID THEY--
HAIL HYDRA!
GET-- GET HER TO A TRANSPORT. AND IF ANYONE SO MUCH AS LAYS A FINGER ON HER, THEY ANSWER TO *ME.*
YES, SUPREME LEADER.
"SUPREME"-- STEVE, WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON HERE?! HOW DID YOU--
OH GOD--STEVE, HONEY--THEY GOT IN YOUR HEAD, DIDN'T THEY? WHATEVER FAUSTUS DID--HE MUST'VE GOTTEN TO YOU FIRST. YOU HAVE TO FIGHT THIS--
SHARON--
--THAT'S NOT WHAT THIS IS.

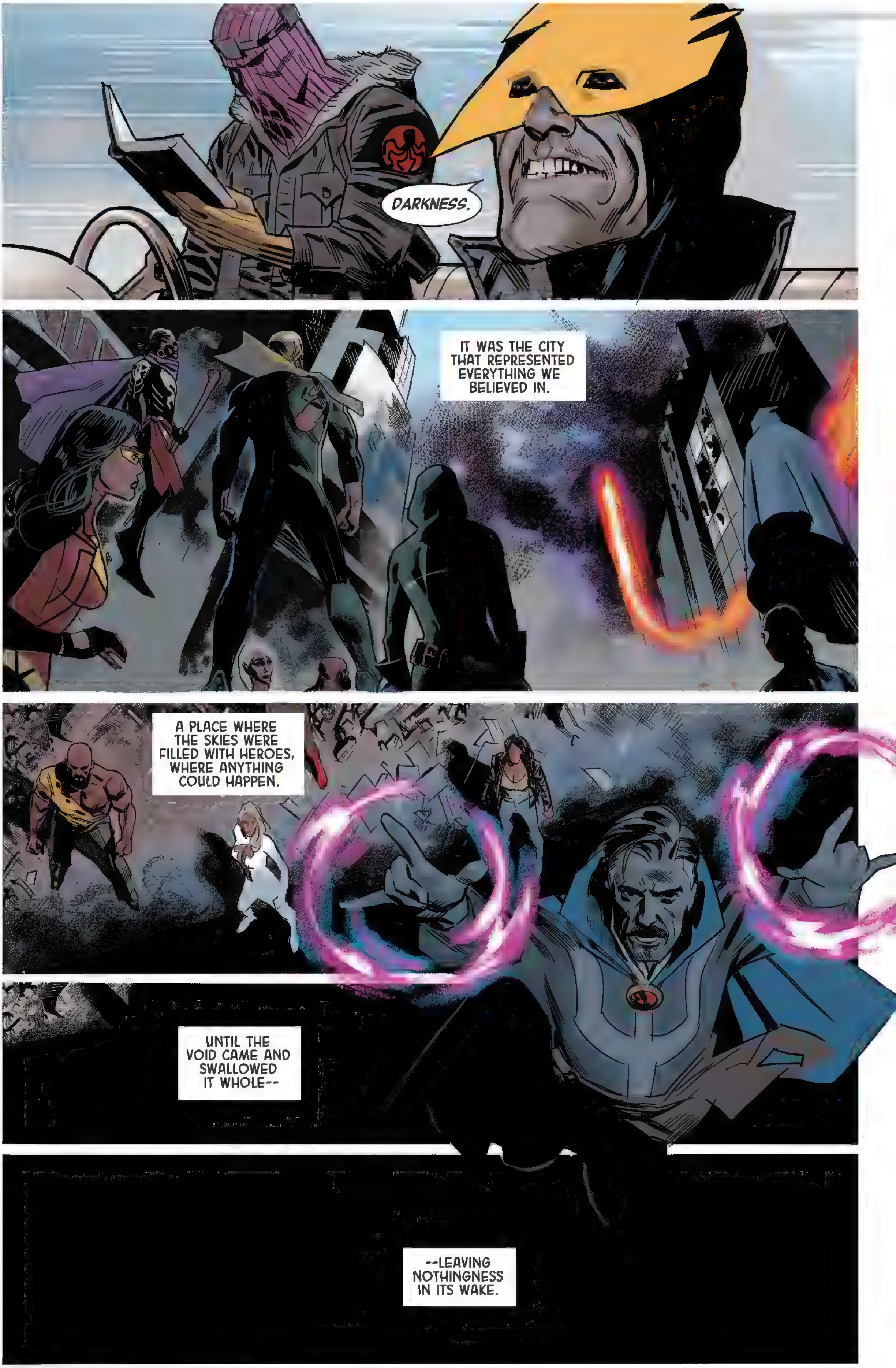

NO.
NO--NOT YOU--YOU *CAN'T* BE--
I AM *SO* SORRY, SHARON--I PROMISE YOU, I WILL TRY TO EXPLAIN--
*STEVE--!!! STEEEVE--!!!*
*LET ME GO, YOU SONS OF--!!!*
--WHEN YOU'RE READY TO LISTEN.
S-SUPREME LEADER? WE HAVE A VESSEL READY FOR YOU AS WELL.
GOOD. USE THE *ILIAD'S* COMMS DECK TO BROADCAST FAUSTUS' MESSAGE TO THE REST OF THE FLEET, THEN EVACUATE TO THE OTHER CARRIERS ONCE IT'S TAKEN HOLD.
I'LL BE RIGHT BEHIND YOU. BUT FIRST--
--I WANT YOU TO PUT ME THROUGH TO *CAPTAIN MARVEL.*

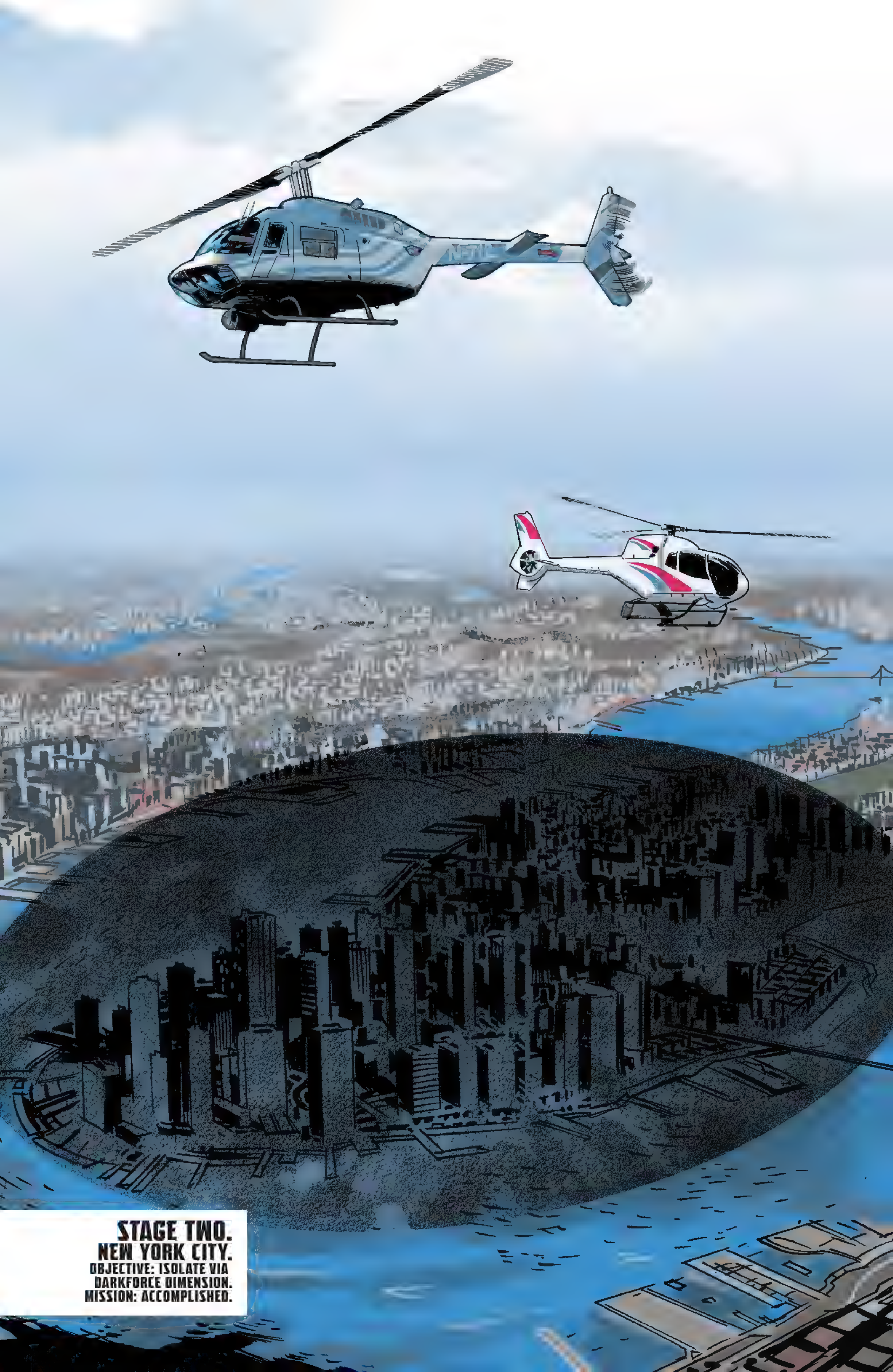

STEVE-- IS THAT YOU? WE'VE GOT INJURED UP HERE--I NEED TO GET THEM TO LAND AND MEDICAL--
HUH.
AGAIN "HUH"?
THE AUX LINE IS DOWN AGAIN. THE SHIELD IS STILL UP, BUT--NOTHING'S RESPONDING.
YOU CHECKED THE--
OF COURSE I CHECKED IT. BUT THIS DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE. DIAGNOSTICS SAY THE CONNECTION IS THERE.
THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE. UNLESS--
UNLESS IT'S ON THE COMMAND SIDE. BUT IT'S PRETTY OBVIOUS WE'RE FIXING A **HARDWARE** PROBLEM--THE GIANT **BOMB HOLE**--AND **THAT** WOULD BE A **SOFTWARE** ISSUE--
OR NOT AN ISSUE AT ALL--
WHAT IF SOMEONE BOMBED THE MACHINE TO DO SUPERFICIAL DAMAGE, SO NO ONE WOULD NOTICE WHEN THEY BROUGHT THE SHIELD DOWN ON THE NETWORK SIDE?
YOU MEAN SO AN ALIEN INVASION COULD GET THROUGH OR SOMETHING? OKAY, BUT--IT DIDN'T. YOU'RE ON THE SAME COMMS AS ME. THE SHIELD WENT BACK UP IN TIME TO STOP IT--
SO WHY BRING DOWN THE SHIELD JUST TO PUT IT BACK UP AGAIN?
EXACTLY.
WHAT'S CHANGED?
18

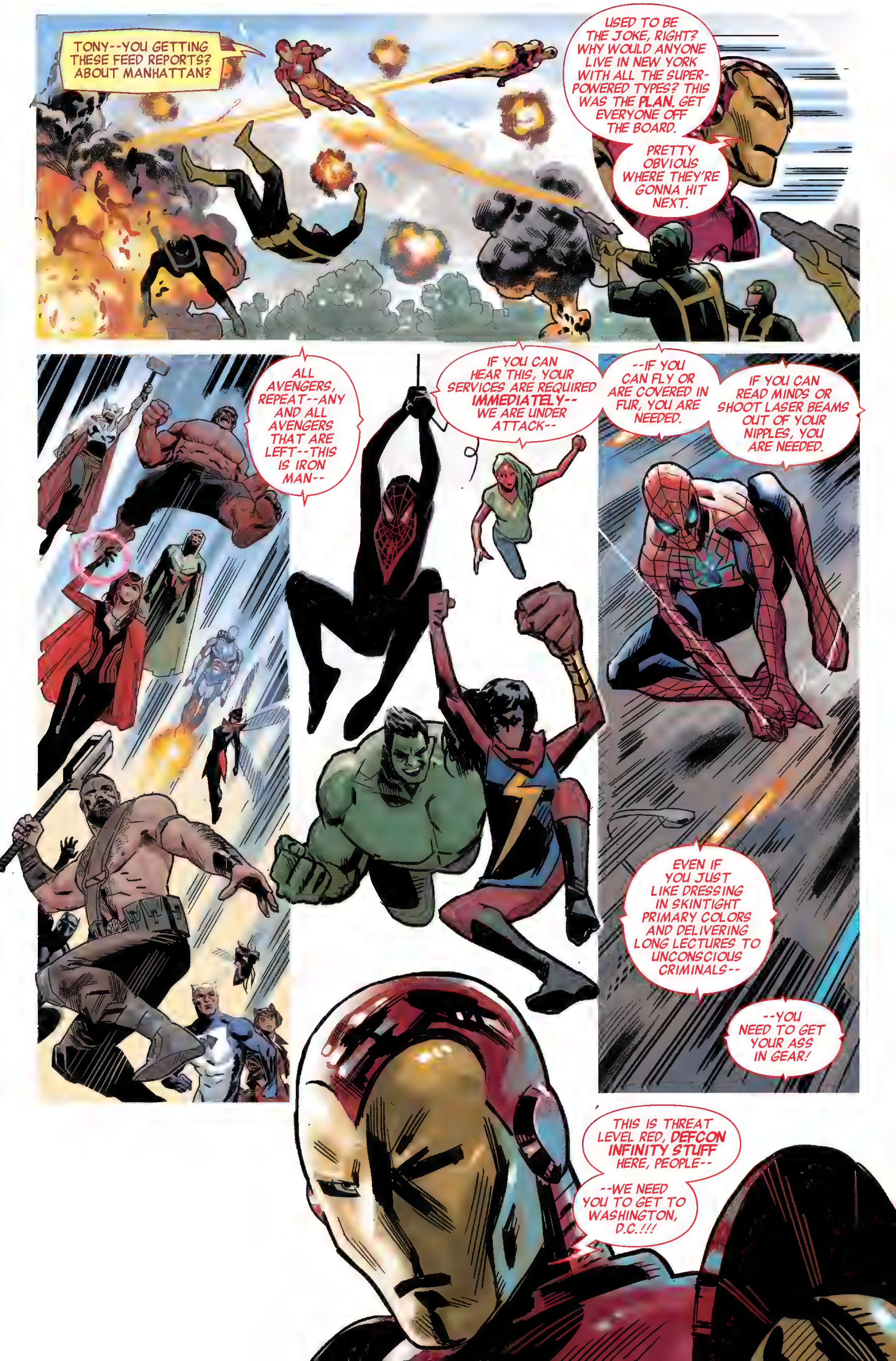

STEVE-- IS EVERYTHING OKAY DOWN THERE? WE LOST CONTACT!
I NEED TO OPEN UP A PORTAL-- I REPEAT, WE'VE GOT WOUNDED UP HERE, BUT THE SHIELD'S NOT RESPONDING--CAN YOU HANDLE IT ON YOUR SIDE?
I'M AFRAID I'M NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO DO THAT, CAROL.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN? LET US BACK IN--THE WAVE IS ALL CLEAR--
ACTUALLY, IT ISN'T. THERE WILL BE ANOTHER WAVE. AND THEN *ANOTHER.* EACH COMING IN MORE RAPID SUCCESSION. THEY WON'T STOP UNTIL THEY FIND THEIR QUEEN.
*QUEEN?* WHAT-- CAP, WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?!
A SOVIET SCIENTIST NAMED IVAN KRAGOFF WAS THE FIRST TO FIGURE OUT HARVESTING A CHITAURI QUEEN WOULD BRING AN INVASION FLEET TO EARTH.
IN HIS LATER YEARS, HE WAS SO WRACKED BY GUILT OVER THE DISCOVERY THAT HE DEDICATED HIMSELF TO ENSURING EARTH WOULD NEVER MEET THAT FATE--
--AND SO HE CREATED THE FIRST DESIGNS FOR THE *PLANETARY DEFENSE SHIELD.* PLANS THAT YOU AND MARIA HILL WERE SO EAGER TO EXPLOIT THE MINUTE THEY WERE PUT IN FRONT OF YOU.
OH, GOD--
STEVE--WHAT HAVE YOU *DONE?* WHAT'S *HAPPENED* TO YOU?!
I'M DOING EXACTLY WHAT *YOU* WOULD DO.
YOU SHOULD BE PROUD OF YOUR WORK HERE, COLONEL. YOU BUILT THE SHIELD TO WALL OFF THE WORLD FROM ITS GREATEST THREATS-- AND NOW THAT *YOU'RE* ON THE OTHER SIDE OF IT--
--YOU *HAVE.*
GOODBYE, CAROL--

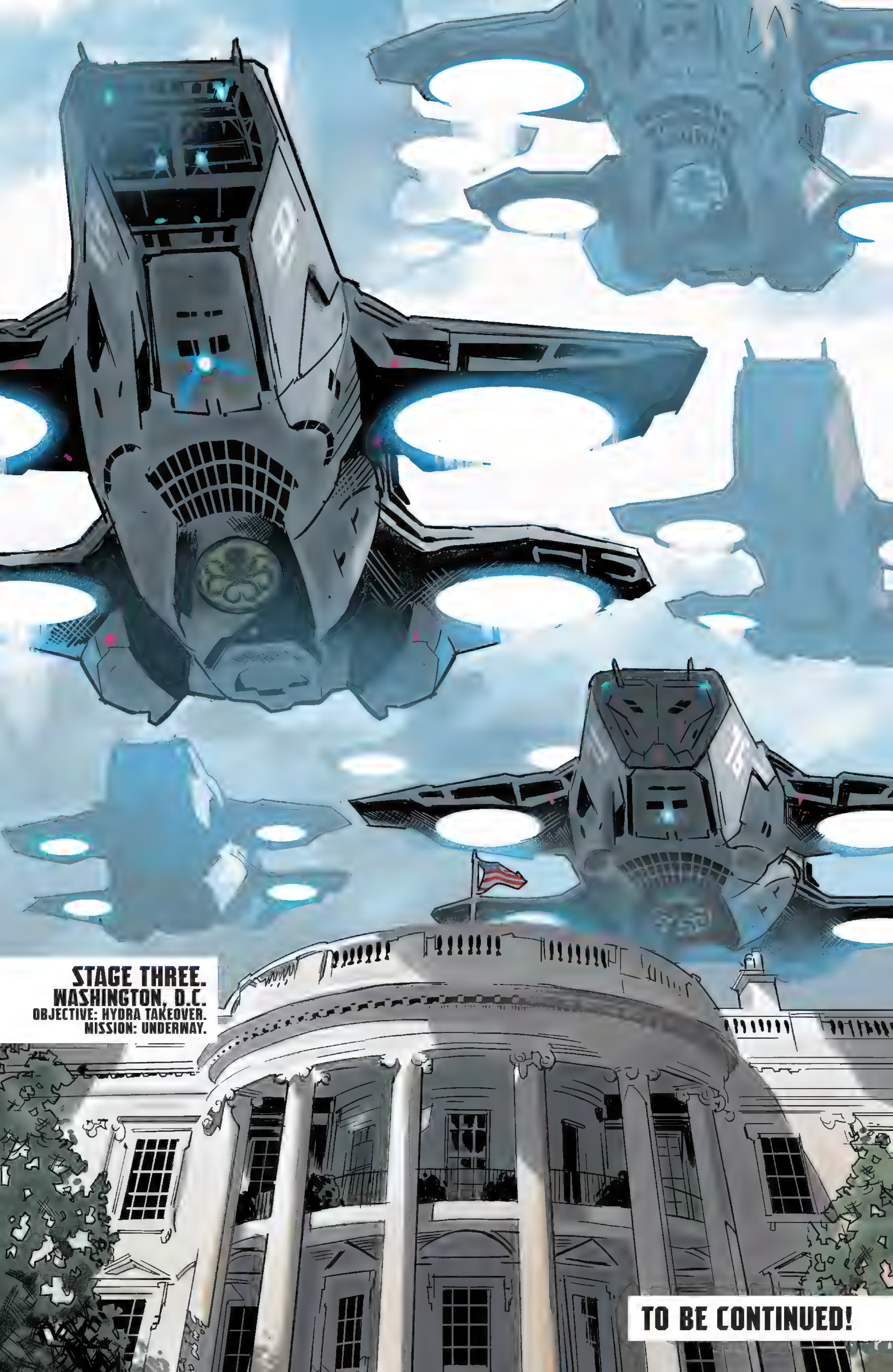

"--THIS WILL BE THE LAST TIME WE EVER SPEAK."
STAGE ONE.
ALPHA FLIGHT SPACE STATION.
OBJECTIVE: EXILE VIA PLANETARY DEFENSE SHIELD.
MISSION: ACCOMPLISHED.


THE CHITAURI DUDES WERE THE *BAIT*--GET A LINEUP OF FIRST RESPONDER HEAVY HITTERS UP IN SPACE, THEN LOCK 'EM OUT SO YOU CAN--
--SO YOU CAN DO WHATEVER THE HELL YOU WANT.
WE NEED TO GET A DISTRESS CALL OUT.
TO WHO? ALMOST EVERYBODY THAT'S ACTIVE WAS EITHER UP IN SPACE WITH CAROL OR IN--
NEW YORK.
IT'S STRANGE--THE MOMENT FINALLY COMES, AND ALL I CAN FEEL IS RELIEF.
I SUPPOSE THAT'S ENOUGH--WHEN FACED WITH SUCH BEAUTY. SUCH JUSTICE.
AND YOU, WITH THE HELP OF THE DARKHOLD, ARE JUST THE MAN TO DELIVER IT.
THEY GAVE US A PRISON. THEY TOOK FROM US OUR VERY SELVES, OUR VERY SOULS, AND THEY MIRED US IN THEIR LIES.
SO WHAT WILL WE GIVE THEM IN RETURN NOW, BOB, OLD FRIEND?
OR SHALL I CALL YOU BY YOUR TRUE NAME--
--BLACKOUT.
R-R-REVENGE, ZEMO.
DEATH.


DARKNESS.
IT WAS THE CITY THAT REPRESENTED EVERYTHING WE BELIEVED IN.
A PLACE WHERE THE SKIES WERE FILLED WITH HEROES, WHERE ANYTHING COULD HAPPEN.
UNTIL THE VOID CAME AND SWALLOWED IT WHOLE--
--LEAVING NOTHINGNESS IN ITS WAKE.


STAGE TWO.
NEW YORK CITY.
OBJECTIVE: ISOLATE VIA DARKFORCE DIMENSION.
MISSION: ACCOMPLISHED.


TONY--YOU GETTING THESE FEED REPORTS? ABOUT MANHATTAN?
USED TO BE THE JOKE, RIGHT? WHY WOULD ANYONE LIVE IN NEW YORK WITH ALL THE SUPER-POWERED TYPES? THIS WAS THE **PLAN**. GET EVERYONE OFF THE BOARD.
PRETTY OBVIOUS WHERE THEY'RE GONNA HIT NEXT.
ALL AVENGERS, REPEAT--ANY AND ALL AVENGERS THAT ARE LEFT--THIS IS IRON MAN--
IF YOU CAN HEAR THIS, YOUR SERVICES ARE REQUIRED **IMMEDIATELY**--WE ARE UNDER ATTACK--
--IF YOU CAN FLY OR ARE COVERED IN FUR, YOU ARE NEEDED.
IF YOU CAN READ MINDS OR SHOOT LASER BEAMS OUT OF YOUR NIPPLES, YOU ARE NEEDED.
EVEN IF YOU JUST LIKE DRESSING IN SKINTIGHT PRIMARY COLORS AND DELIVERING LONG LECTURES TO UNCONSCIOUS CRIMINALS--
--YOU NEED TO GET YOUR ASS IN GEAR!
THIS IS THREAT LEVEL RED, **DEFCON INFINITY STUFF** HERE, PEOPLE--
--WE NEED YOU TO GET TO WASHINGTON, D.C.!!!


STAGE THREE.
WASHINGTON, D.C.
OBJECTIVE: HYDRA TAKEOVER.
MISSION: UNDERWAY.
TO BE CONTINUED!

# SECRET EMPIRE PROLOGUE

## APRIL

### CAPTAIN AMERICA: SAM WILSON #21

WITH STEVE ROGERS' SECRET EMPIRE ON THE HORIZON, AMERICA NEEDS SAM WILSON MORE THAN EVER --BUT HAS HE ALREADY HIT HIS BREAKING POINT?

### THUNDERBOLTS #12

BARON ZEMO MAKES A FINAL PLAY FOR KOBIK, THE COSMIC CUBE THAT STARTED IT ALL. WILL BUCKY BARNES AND HIS TEAM BE CAUGHT IN THE CROSSFIRE?

[redacted]

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### UNCANNY AVENGERS #22

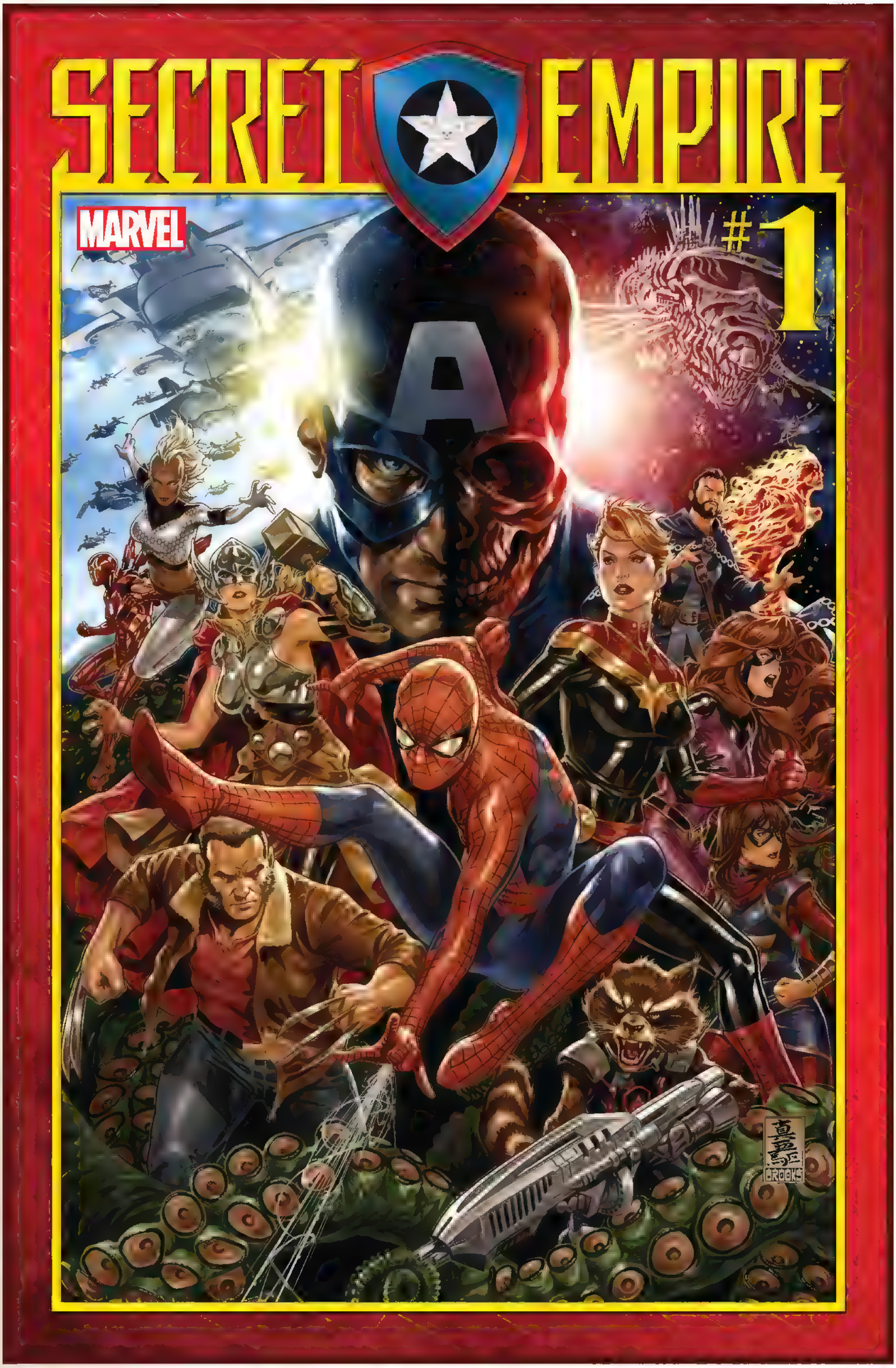
THE UNITY SQUAD HAS BEEN PLAYING A CAT-AND-MOUSE GAME WITH THE RED SKULL--BUT IT ALL ENDS HERE! AND NOT EVERYONE WILL FINISH ON THEIR FEET...

### CAPTAIN AMERICA: STEVE ROGERS #16

THE FINAL PIECES OF STEVE ROGERS' PLAN FALL INTO PLACE--AND THE WORLD WILL NEVER BE THE SAME.

# SECRET EMPIRE

## NEXT

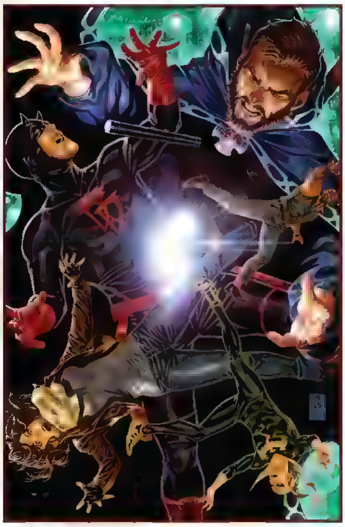

SECRET EMPIRE
MARVEL
#1
CROOKS

THE MOST TRUSTED SUPER HERO IN THE WORLD HAS DECLARED HIS ALLEGIANCE TO HYDRA. WHAT DOES THAT MEAN FOR THE MARVEL UNIVERSE?

# SECRET EMPIRE

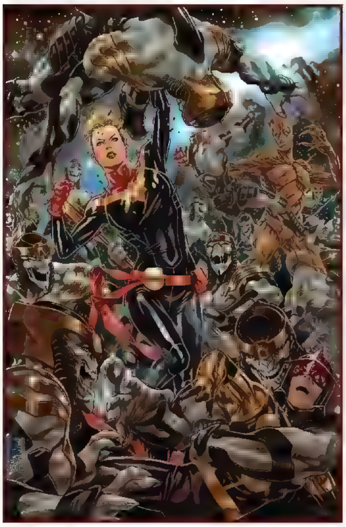
## MAY

### SECRET EMPIRE #2



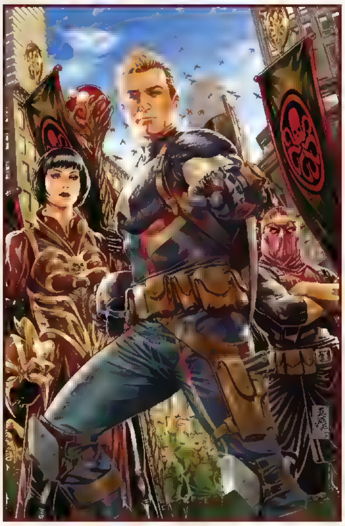
THE DEFENDERS STRUGGLE TO SURVIVE IN A DARKFORCE-ENSHROUDED MANHATTAN... AND A NEW HERO UNCOVERS THE TRUTH ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TO CAPTAIN AMERICA.

### SECRET EMPIRE #3



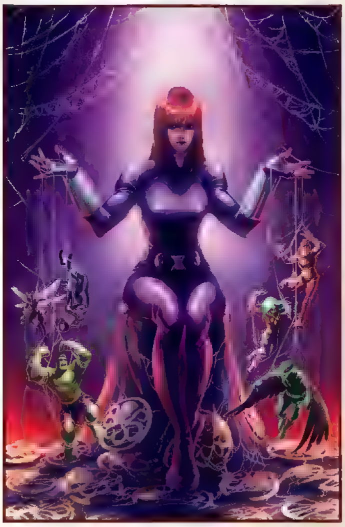
UNDER CONSTANT ATTACK FROM WAVE AFTER WAVE OF INVADING CHITAURI ALIENS, CAPTAIN MARVEL AND THE DEEP-SPACE TASK FORCE UNDER HER COMMAND ARE WAGING A WAR OF ATTRITION--ONE THEY MAY NOT BE ABLE TO SURVIVE!

### FREE COMIC BOOK DAY: SECRET EMPIRE



THE BATTLE FOR WASHINGTON D.C. RAGES, BUT CAPTAIN AMERICA HAS AN ACE UP HIS SLEEVE...

### SECRET EMPIRE: UPRISING #1



BLACK WIDOW LEADS THE NEXT GENERATION OF HEROES ON A MISSION THAT WILL CHALLENGE EVERYTHING THEY BELIEVE IN.

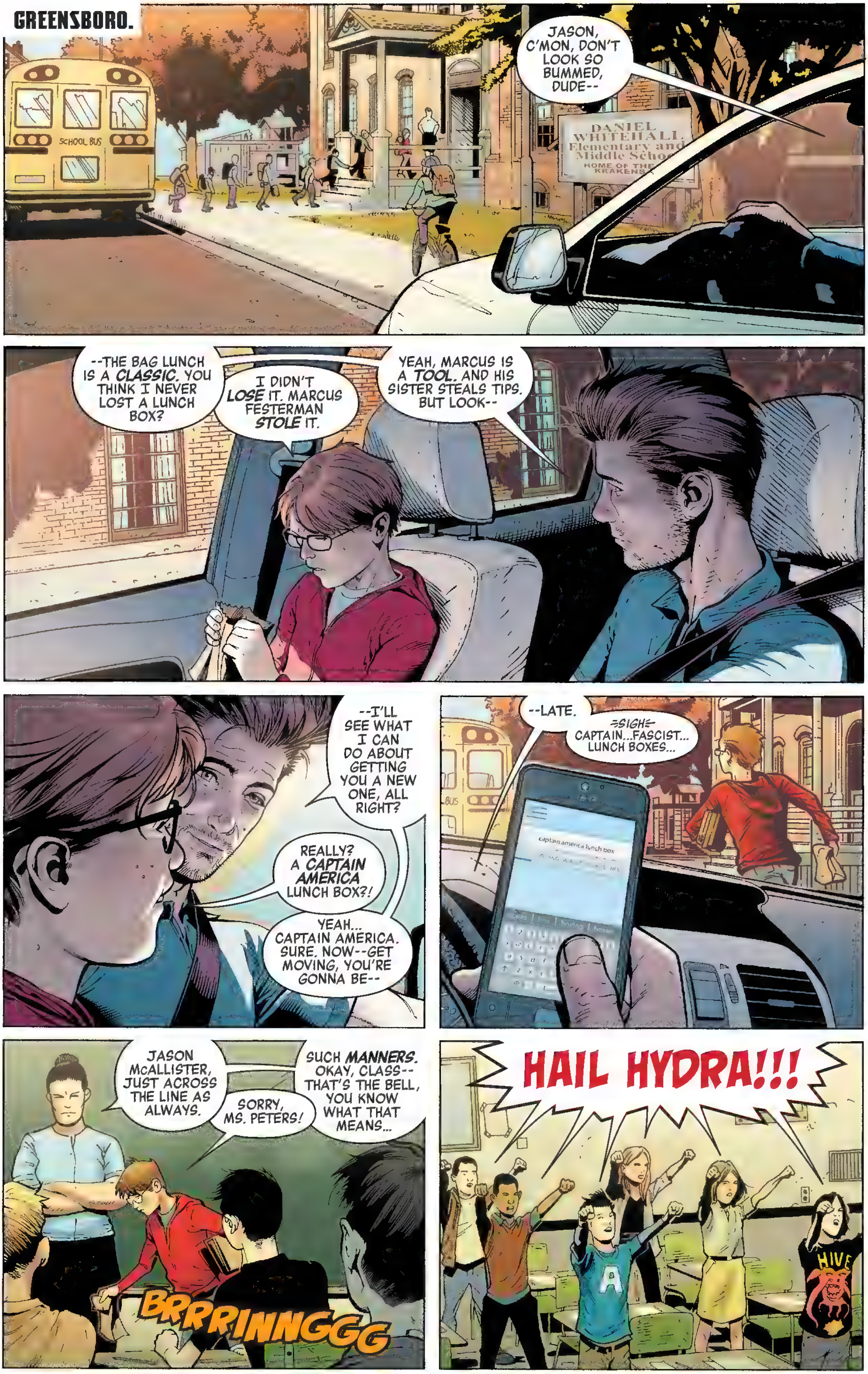
WELCOME TO THE NEW RED ROOM.

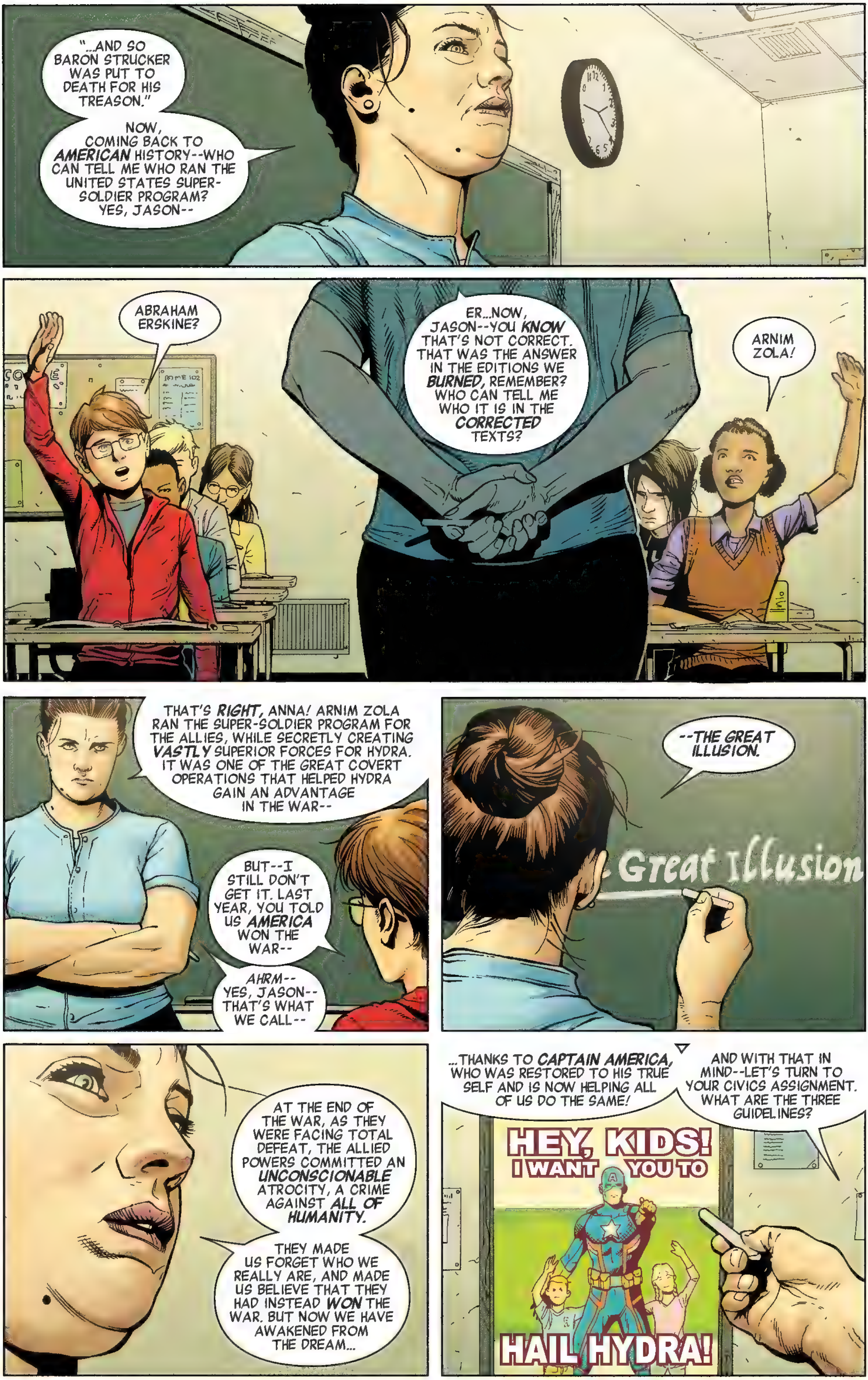
# SECRET EMPIRE™

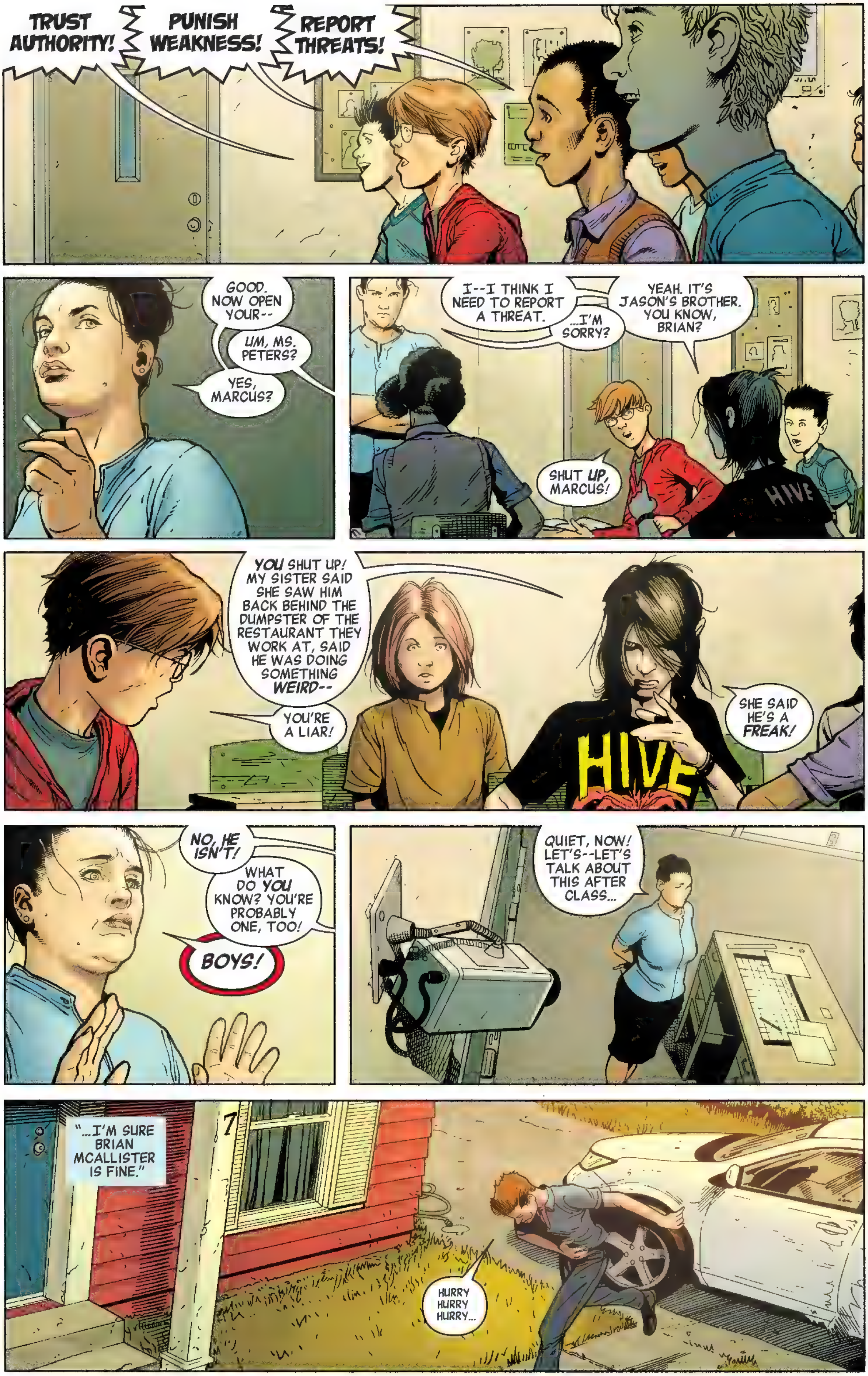
MARVEL

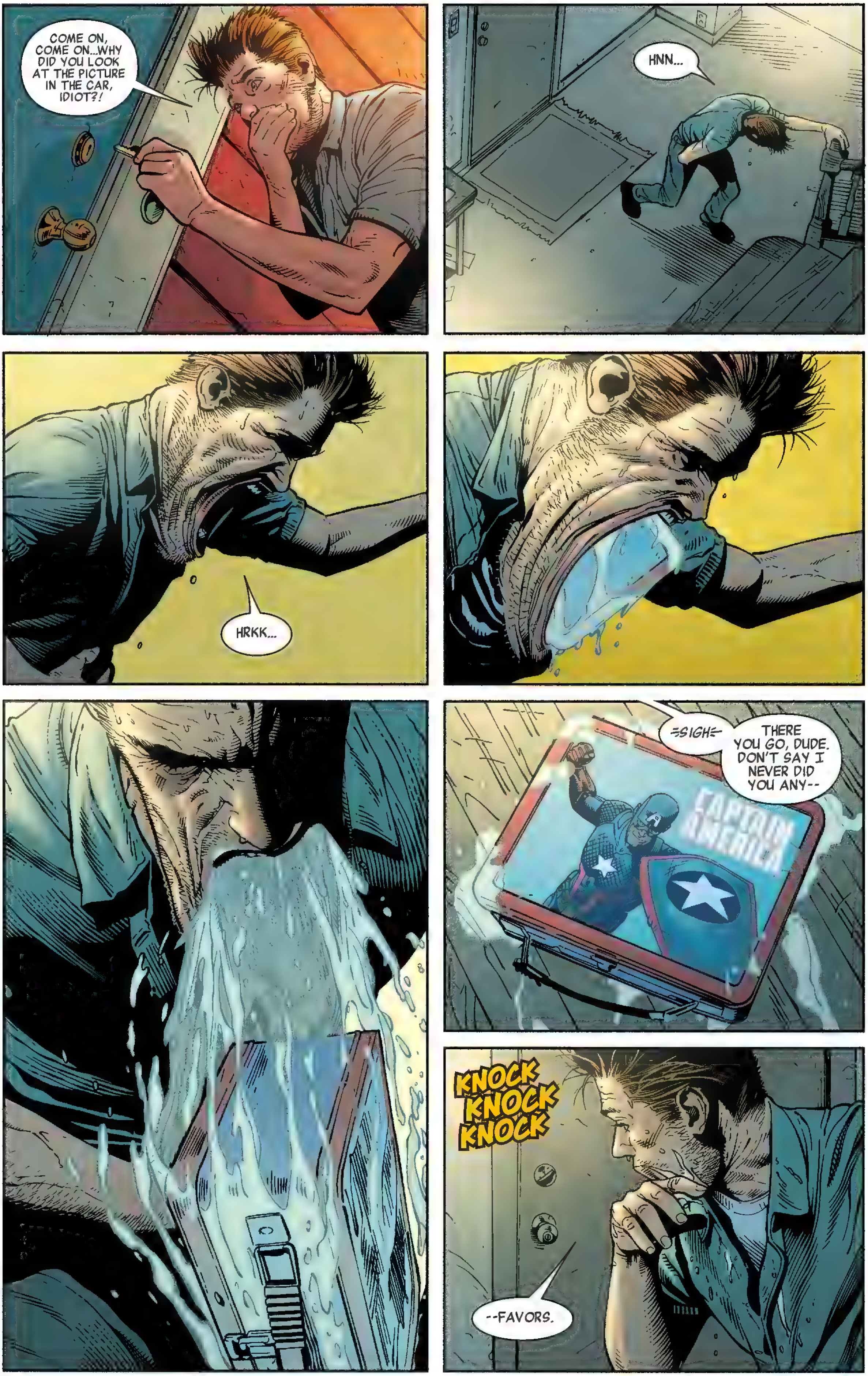
#1

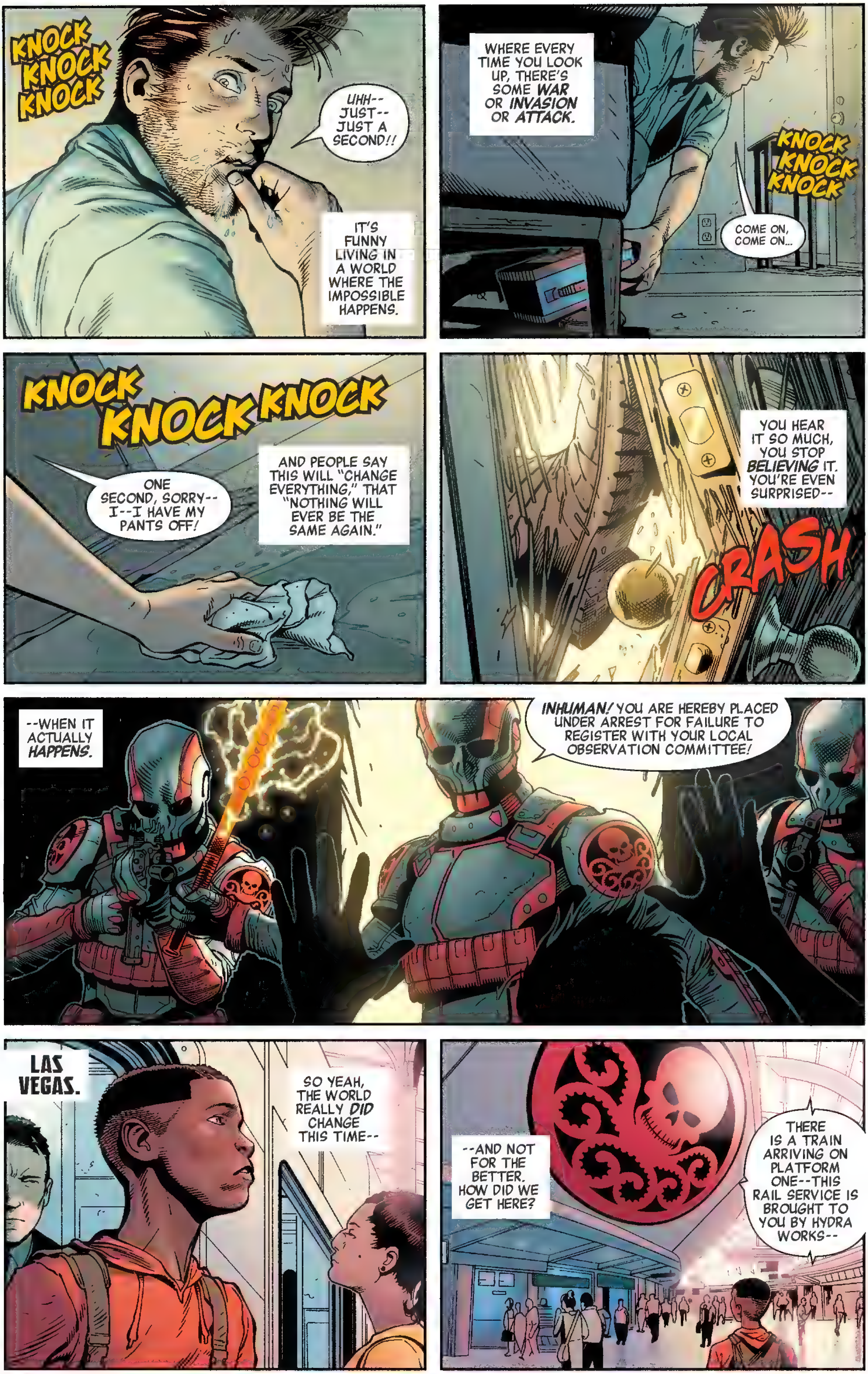
NICK SPENCER • STEVE McNIVEN • JAY LEISTEN • MATTHEW WILSON

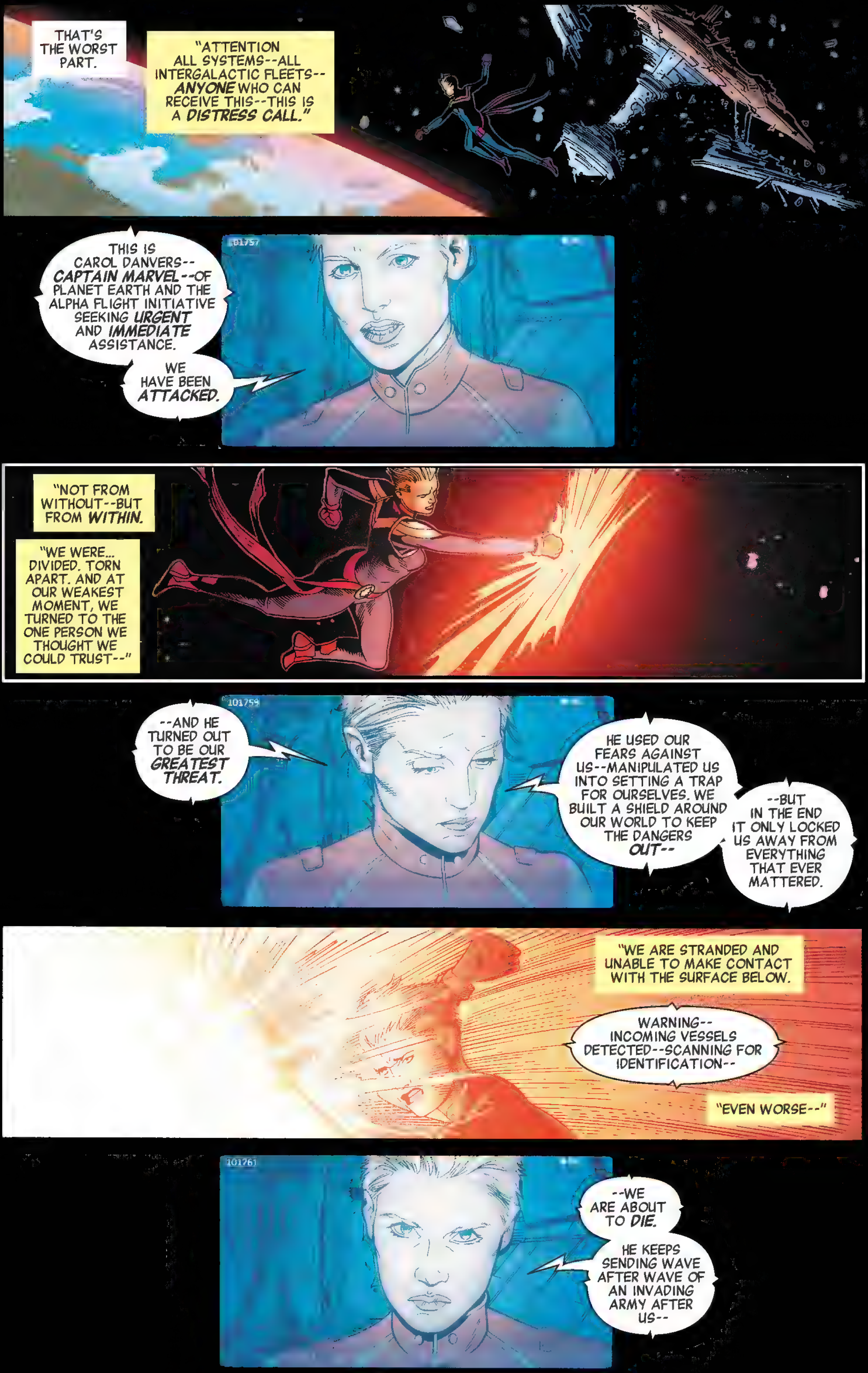

GREENSBORO.
SCHOOL BUS
DANIEL WHITEHALL Elementary and Middle Scho
HOME OF THE KRAKENS
JASON, C'MON, DON'T LOOK SO BUMMED, DUDE--
--THE BAG LUNCH IS A *CLASSIC.* YOU THINK I NEVER LOST A LUNCH BOX?
I DIDN'T *LOSE* IT. MARCUS FESTERMAN *STOLE* IT.
YEAH, MARCUS IS A *TOOL,* AND HIS SISTER STEALS TIPS. BUT LOOK--
--I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN DO ABOUT GETTING YOU A NEW ONE, ALL RIGHT?
REALLY? A *CAPTAIN AMERICA* LUNCH BOX?!
YEAH... CAPTAIN AMERICA. SURE. NOW--GET MOVING, YOU'RE GONNA BE--
--LATE.
=SIGH= CAPTAIN...FASCIST... LUNCH BOXES...
captain america lunch box
JASON MCALLISTER, JUST ACROSS THE LINE AS ALWAYS.
SORRY, MS. PETERS!
SUCH *MANNERS.* OKAY, CLASS-- THAT'S THE BELL, YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS...
BRRRINNGGG
HAIL HYDRA!!!
A
HIVE

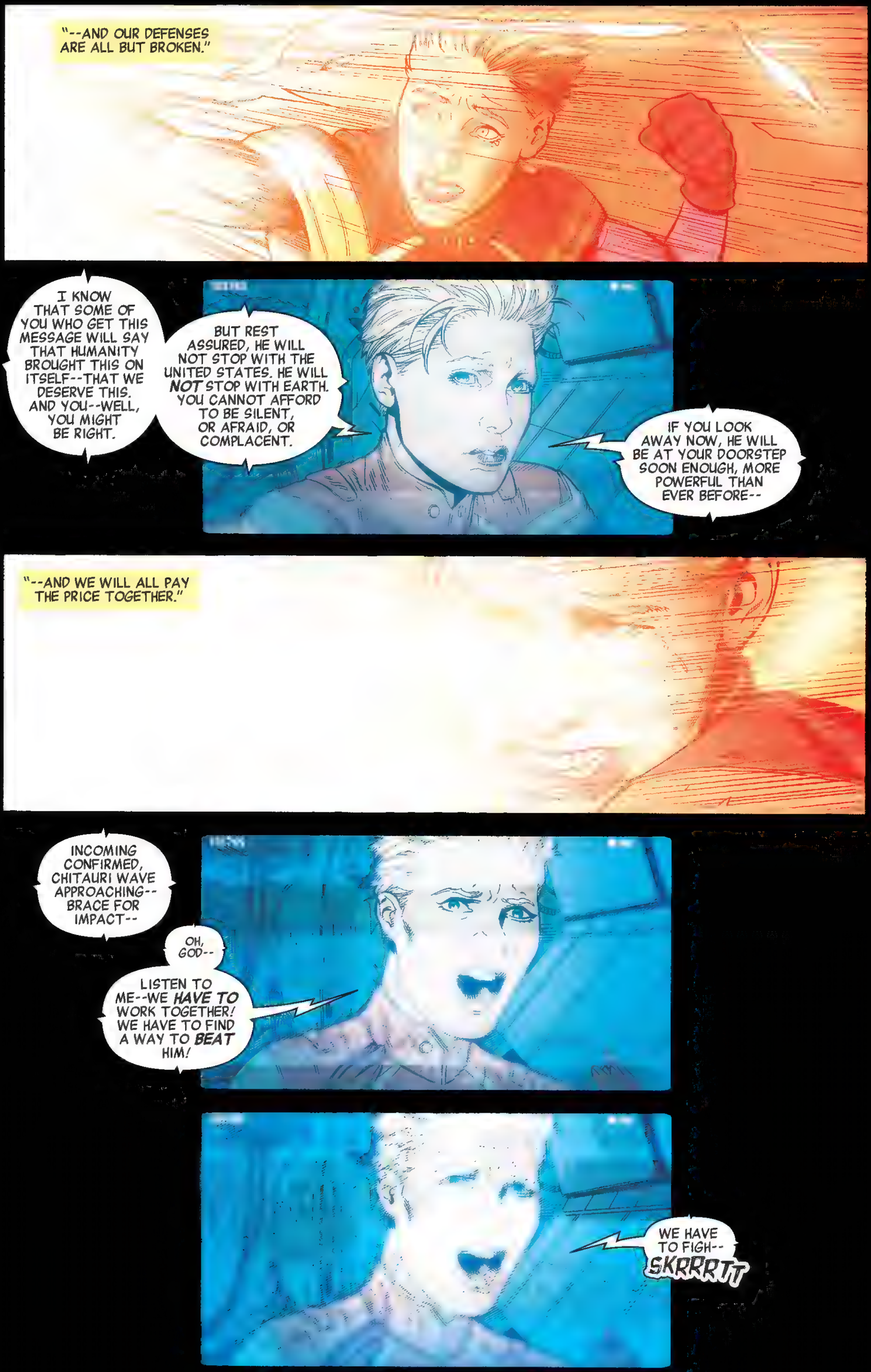

"...AND SO BARON STRUCKER WAS PUT TO DEATH FOR HIS TREASON."
NOW, COMING BACK TO *AMERICAN* HISTORY--WHO CAN TELL ME WHO RAN THE UNITED STATES SUPER-SOLDIER PROGRAM? YES, JASON--
ROOM 102
ABRAHAM ERSKINE?
ER...NOW, JASON--YOU *KNOW* THAT'S NOT CORRECT. THAT WAS THE ANSWER IN THE EDITIONS WE *BURNED*, REMEMBER? WHO CAN TELL ME WHO IT IS IN THE *CORRECTED* TEXTS?
ARNIM ZOLA!
THAT'S *RIGHT*, ANNA! ARNIM ZOLA RAN THE SUPER-SOLDIER PROGRAM FOR THE ALLIES, WHILE SECRETLY CREATING *VASTLY* SUPERIOR FORCES FOR HYDRA. IT WAS ONE OF THE GREAT COVERT OPERATIONS THAT HELPED HYDRA GAIN AN ADVANTAGE IN THE WAR--
BUT--I STILL DON'T GET IT. LAST YEAR, YOU TOLD US *AMERICA* WON THE WAR--
*AHRM*--YES, JASON--THAT'S WHAT WE CALL--
--*THE GREAT ILLUSION.*
Great Illusion
AT THE END OF THE WAR, AS THEY WERE FACING TOTAL DEFEAT, THE ALLIED POWERS COMMITTED AN *UNCONSCIONABLE* ATROCITY, A CRIME AGAINST *ALL OF HUMANITY.*
THEY MADE US FORGET WHO WE REALLY ARE, AND MADE US BELIEVE THAT THEY HAD INSTEAD *WON* THE WAR. BUT NOW WE HAVE AWAKENED FROM THE DREAM...
...THANKS TO *CAPTAIN AMERICA*, WHO WAS RESTORED TO HIS TRUE SELF AND IS NOW HELPING ALL OF US DO THE SAME!
AND WITH THAT IN MIND--LET'S TURN TO YOUR CIVICS ASSIGNMENT. WHAT ARE THE THREE GUIDELINES?
HEY, KIDS! I WANT YOU TO
HAIL HYDRA!


TRUST AUTHORITY!
PUNISH WEAKNESS!
REPORT THREATS!
GOOD. NOW OPEN YOUR--
UM, MS. PETERS?
YES, MARCUS?
I--I THINK I NEED TO REPORT A THREAT.
...I'M SORRY?
YEAH. IT'S JASON'S BROTHER. YOU KNOW, BRIAN?
SHUT UP, MARCUS!
HIVE
YOU SHUT UP! MY SISTER SAID SHE SAW HIM BACK BEHIND THE DUMPSTER OF THE RESTAURANT THEY WORK AT, SAID HE WAS DOING SOMETHING WEIRD--
YOU'RE A LIAR!
SHE SAID HE'S A FREAK!
HIVE
NO, HE ISN'T!
WHAT DO YOU KNOW? YOU'RE PROBABLY ONE, TOO!
BOYS!
QUIET, NOW! LET'S--LET'S TALK ABOUT THIS AFTER CLASS...
"...I'M SURE BRIAN MCALLISTER IS FINE."
7
HURRY HURRY HURRY...


COME ON, COME ON...WHY DID YOU LOOK AT THE PICTURE IN THE CAR, IDIOT?!
HNN...
HRKK...
=SIGH=
THERE YOU GO, DUDE. DON'T SAY I NEVER DID YOU ANY--
CAPTAIN AMERICA
KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK
--FAVORS.


KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK
UHH-- JUST-- JUST A SECOND!!
IT'S FUNNY LIVING IN A WORLD WHERE THE IMPOSSIBLE HAPPENS.
WHERE EVERY TIME YOU LOOK UP, THERE'S SOME WAR OR INVASION OR ATTACK.
KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK
COME ON, COME ON...
KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK
ONE SECOND, SORRY-- I--I HAVE MY PANTS OFF!
AND PEOPLE SAY THIS WILL "CHANGE EVERYTHING," THAT "NOTHING WILL EVER BE THE SAME AGAIN."
YOU HEAR IT SO MUCH, YOU STOP BELIEVING IT. YOU'RE EVEN SURPRISED--
CRASH
--WHEN IT ACTUALLY HAPPENS.
INHUMAN! YOU ARE HEREBY PLACED UNDER ARREST FOR FAILURE TO REGISTER WITH YOUR LOCAL OBSERVATION COMMITTEE!
LAS VEGAS.
SO YEAH, THE WORLD REALLY DID CHANGE THIS TIME--
--AND NOT FOR THE BETTER. HOW DID WE GET HERE?
THERE IS A TRAIN ARRIVING ON PLATFORM ONE--THIS RAIL SERVICE IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY HYDRA WORKS--


THAT'S THE WORST PART.
"ATTENTION ALL SYSTEMS--ALL INTERGALACTIC FLEETS--***ANYONE*** WHO CAN RECEIVE THIS--THIS IS A ***DISTRESS CALL.***"
101757
THIS IS CAROL DANVERS--***CAPTAIN MARVEL***--OF PLANET EARTH AND THE ALPHA FLIGHT INITIATIVE SEEKING ***URGENT*** AND ***IMMEDIATE*** ASSISTANCE.
WE HAVE BEEN ***ATTACKED.***
"NOT FROM WITHOUT--BUT FROM ***WITHIN.***
"WE WERE... DIVIDED. TORN APART. AND AT OUR WEAKEST MOMENT, WE TURNED TO THE ONE PERSON WE THOUGHT WE COULD TRUST--"
101759
--AND HE TURNED OUT TO BE OUR ***GREATEST THREAT.***
HE USED OUR FEARS AGAINST US--MANIPULATED US INTO SETTING A TRAP FOR OURSELVES. WE BUILT A SHIELD AROUND OUR WORLD TO KEEP THE DANGERS ***OUT***--
--BUT IN THE END IT ONLY LOCKED US AWAY FROM EVERYTHING THAT EVER MATTERED.
"WE ARE STRANDED AND UNABLE TO MAKE CONTACT WITH THE SURFACE BELOW.
WARNING--INCOMING VESSELS DETECTED--SCANNING FOR IDENTIFICATION--
"EVEN WORSE--"
101761
--WE ARE ABOUT TO ***DIE.***
HE KEEPS SENDING WAVE AFTER WAVE OF AN INVADING ARMY AFTER US--


"--AND OUR DEFENSES ARE ALL BUT BROKEN."
I KNOW THAT SOME OF YOU WHO GET THIS MESSAGE WILL SAY THAT HUMANITY BROUGHT THIS ON ITSELF--THAT WE DESERVE THIS. AND YOU--WELL, YOU MIGHT BE RIGHT.
BUT REST ASSURED, HE WILL NOT STOP WITH THE UNITED STATES. HE WILL *NOT* STOP WITH EARTH. YOU CANNOT AFFORD TO BE SILENT, OR AFRAID, OR COMPLACENT.
IF YOU LOOK AWAY NOW, HE WILL BE AT YOUR DOORSTEP SOON ENOUGH, MORE POWERFUL THAN EVER BEFORE--
"--AND WE WILL ALL PAY THE PRICE TOGETHER."
INCOMING CONFIRMED, CHITAURI WAVE APPROACHING--BRACE FOR IMPACT--
OH, GOD--
LISTEN TO ME--WE *HAVE TO* WORK TOGETHER! WE HAVE TO FIND A WAY TO *BEAT* HIM!
WE HAVE TO FIGH--
SKRRRTT

# SECRET EMPIRE

A Cosmic Cube transformed Steve Rogers, Captain America, into the ultimate Hydra sleeper agent--and after months of scheming and manipulation, the country is now under the control of hydra.

Earth's most powerful heroes are stranded beyond Earth's Planetary Defense Shield, at the mercy of a Chitauri Invasion--or trapped inside the impenetrable Darkforce bubble that currently envelops New York City. The handful of heroes that remain must work from the shadows to oppose Captain America's sinister regime--or face dire consequences.

Writer ▪ Nick Spencer
Penciler ▪ Steve McNiven
Inker ▪ Jay Leisten
Colorist ▪ Matthew Wilson
Letterer ▪ VC's Travis Lanham
Recap page art ▪ Andrea Sorrentino
Cover ▪ Mark Brooks
Variant Covers ▪ John Tyler Christopher; Adi Granov; Dan Mora & Edgar Delgado; Andrea Sorrentino; Skottie Young; Todd Nauck & Rachelle Rosenberg

Production Design ▪ Carlos Lao
Assistant Editor ▪ Alanna Smith
Editor ▪ Tom Brevoort
Editor in Chief ▪ Axel Alonso
Chief Creative Officer ▪ Joe Quesada
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Executive Producer ▪ Alan Fine

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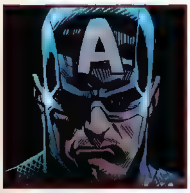
# Hydra Command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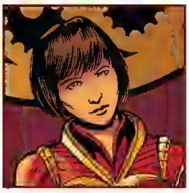
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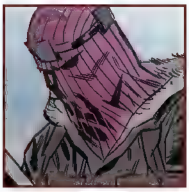
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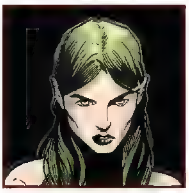
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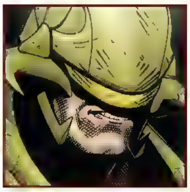
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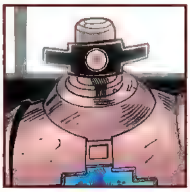
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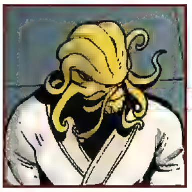
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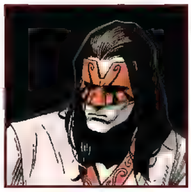
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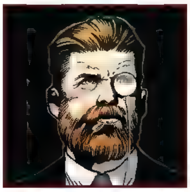
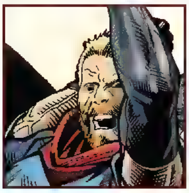

Dr. Faustus

Hydra High Council

# Avengers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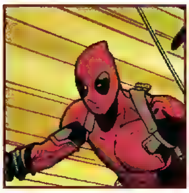
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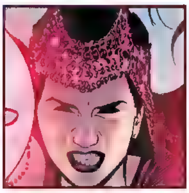
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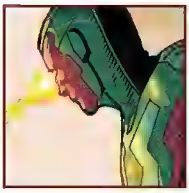
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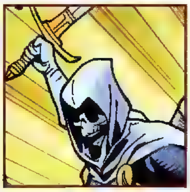
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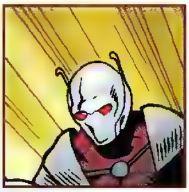
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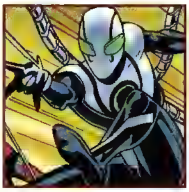
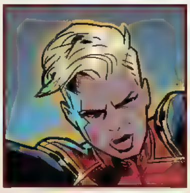
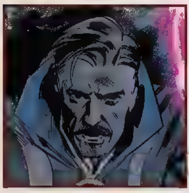

Superior Octopus

# Exiled

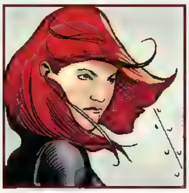
Beyond the Shield


Captain Marvel

Darkforce New York


Doctor Strange

# Primary Targets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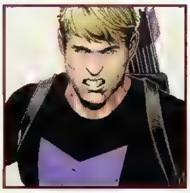
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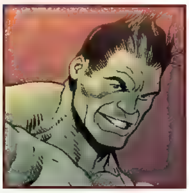
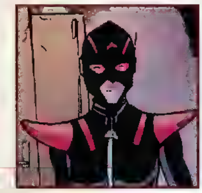

Hulk (Amadeus Cho)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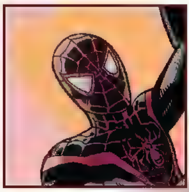
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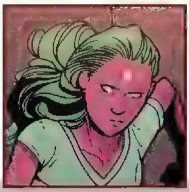
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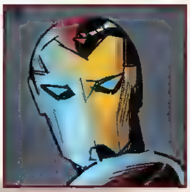
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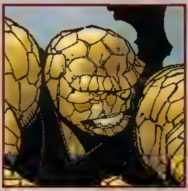
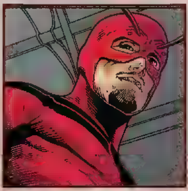

The Thing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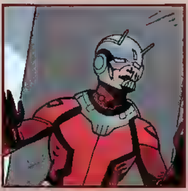
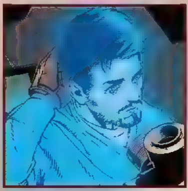
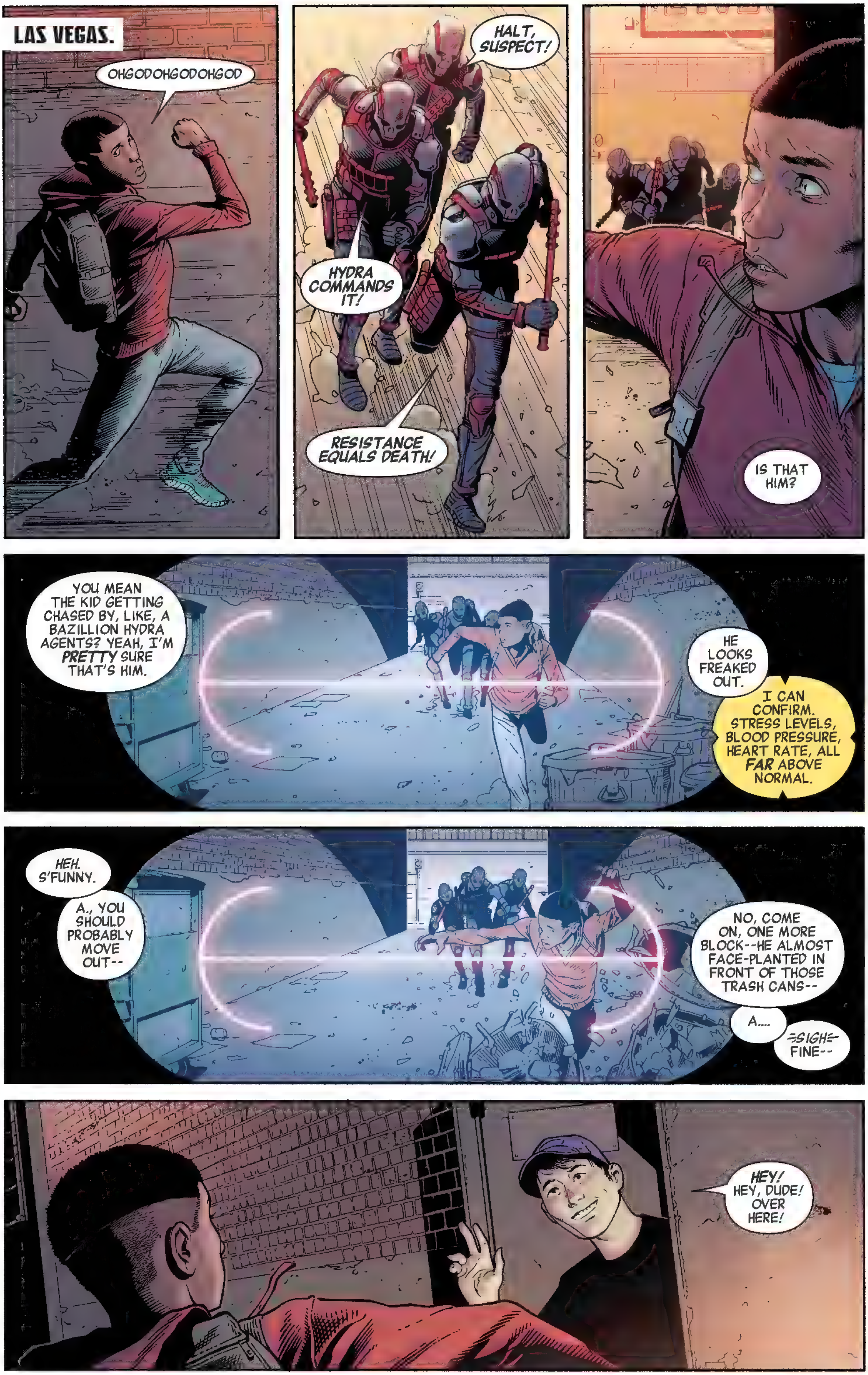
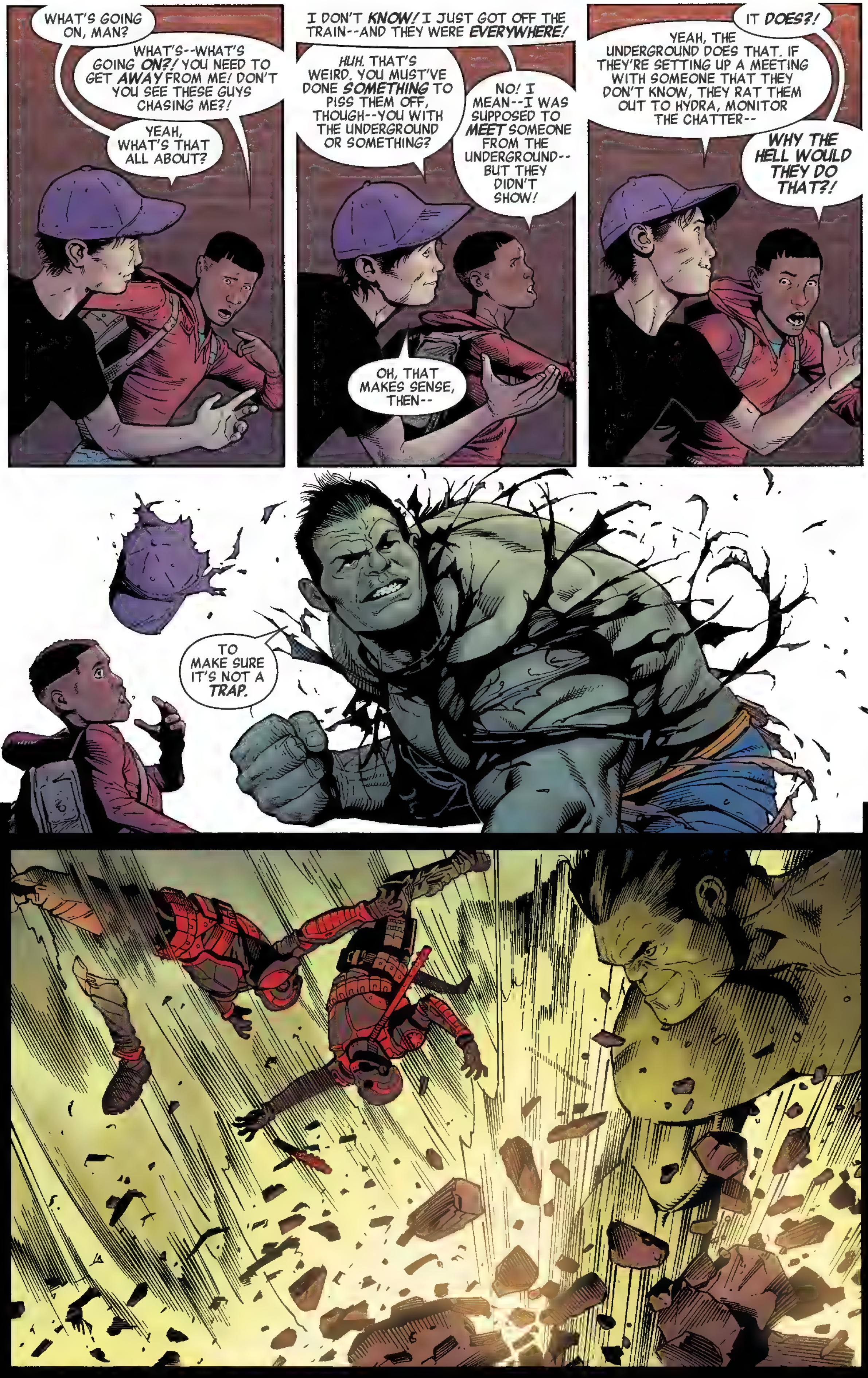
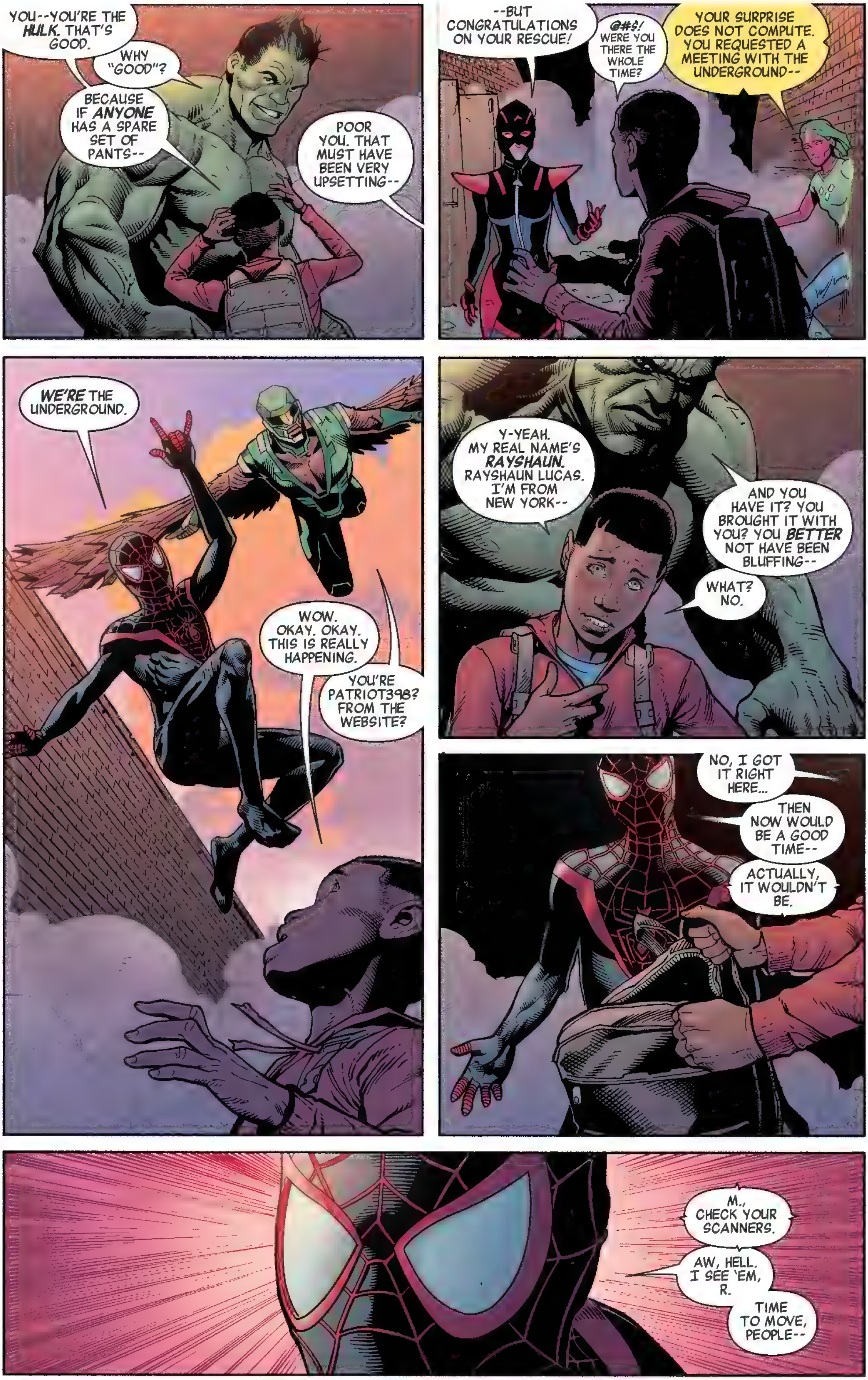
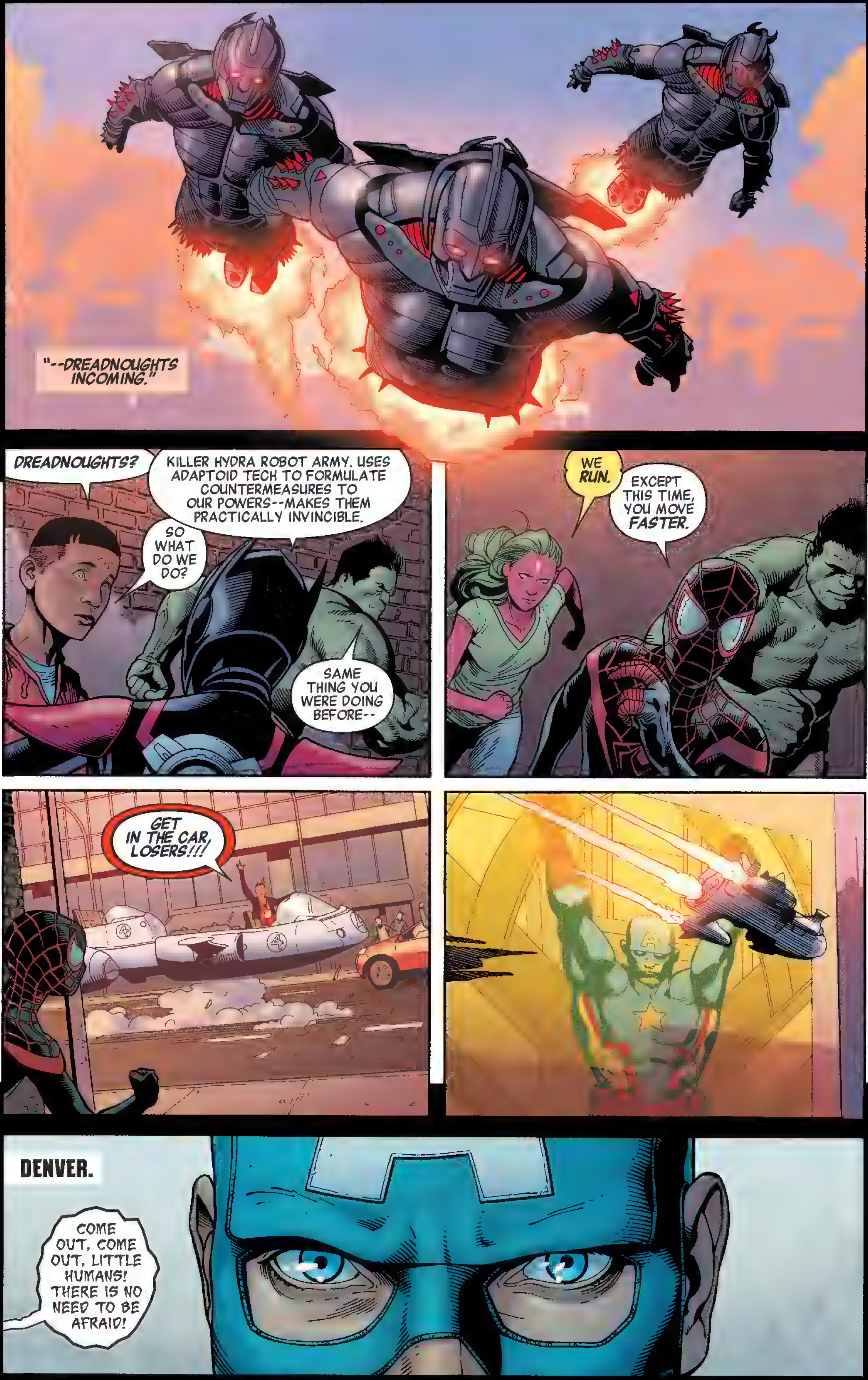

Ant-Man

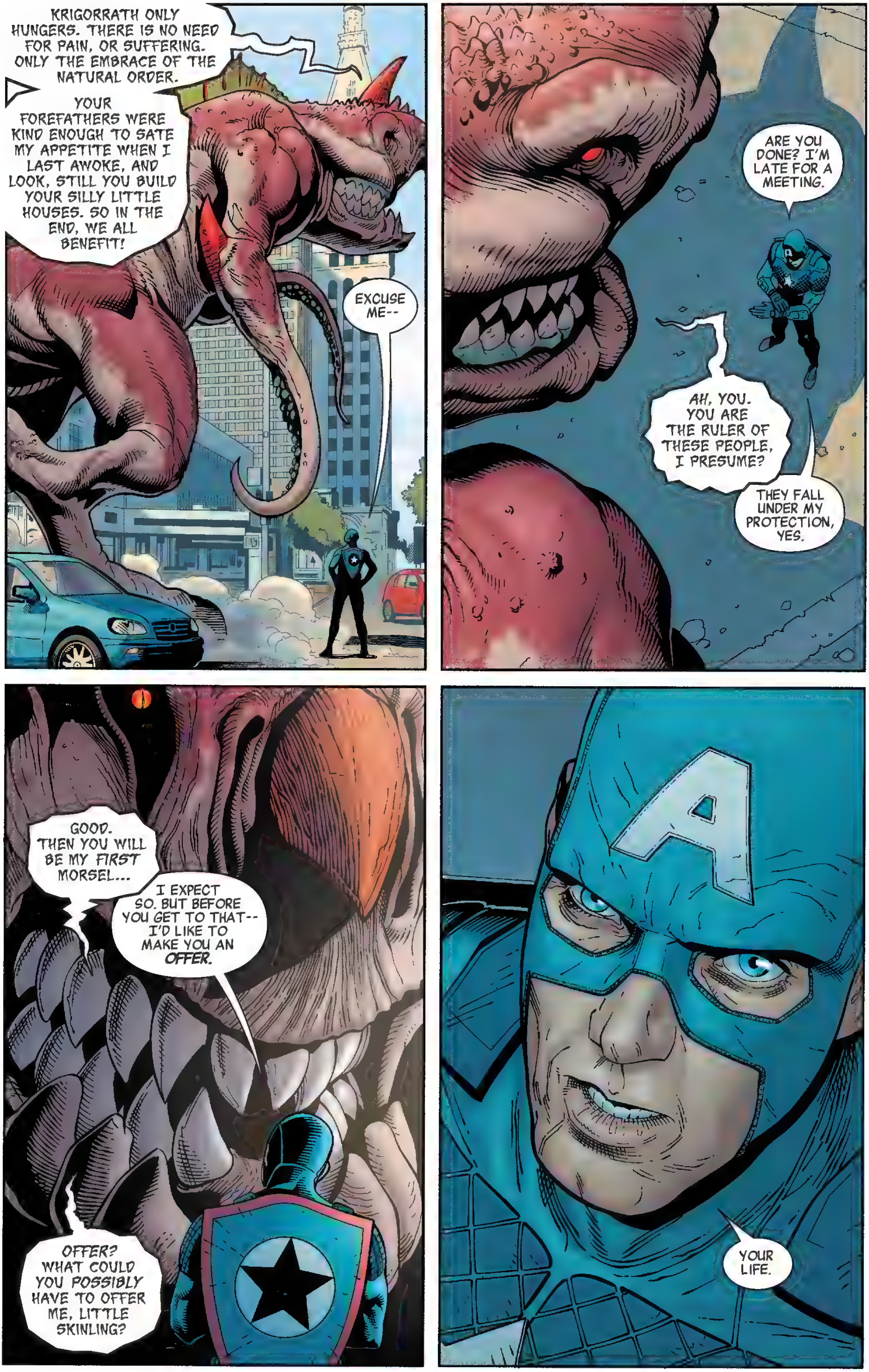

Tony Stark (A.I.)

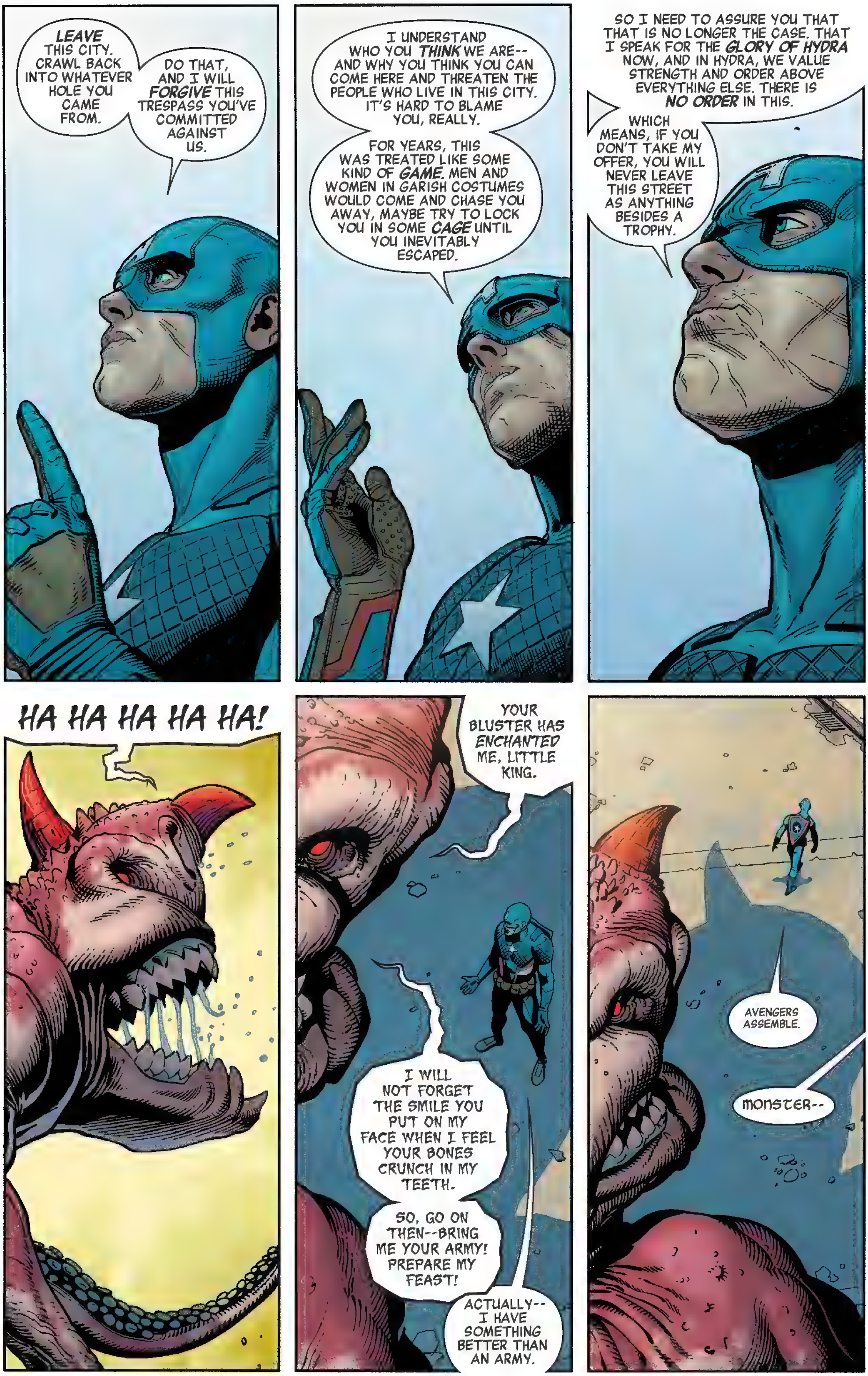

LAS VEGAS.
OHGODOHGODOHGOD
HALT, SUSPECT!
HYDRA COMMANDS IT!
RESISTANCE EQUALS DEATH!
IS THAT HIM?
YOU MEAN THE KID GETTING CHASED BY, LIKE, A BAZILLION HYDRA AGENTS? YEAH, I'M *PRETTY* SURE THAT'S HIM.
HE LOOKS FREAKED OUT.
I CAN CONFIRM. STRESS LEVELS, BLOOD PRESSURE, HEART RATE, ALL *FAR* ABOVE NORMAL.
HEH. S'FUNNY.
A., YOU SHOULD PROBABLY MOVE OUT--
NO, COME ON, ONE MORE BLOCK--HE ALMOST FACE-PLANTED IN FRONT OF THOSE TRASH CANS--
A....
=SIGH= FINE--
*HEY!* HEY, DUDE! OVER HERE!

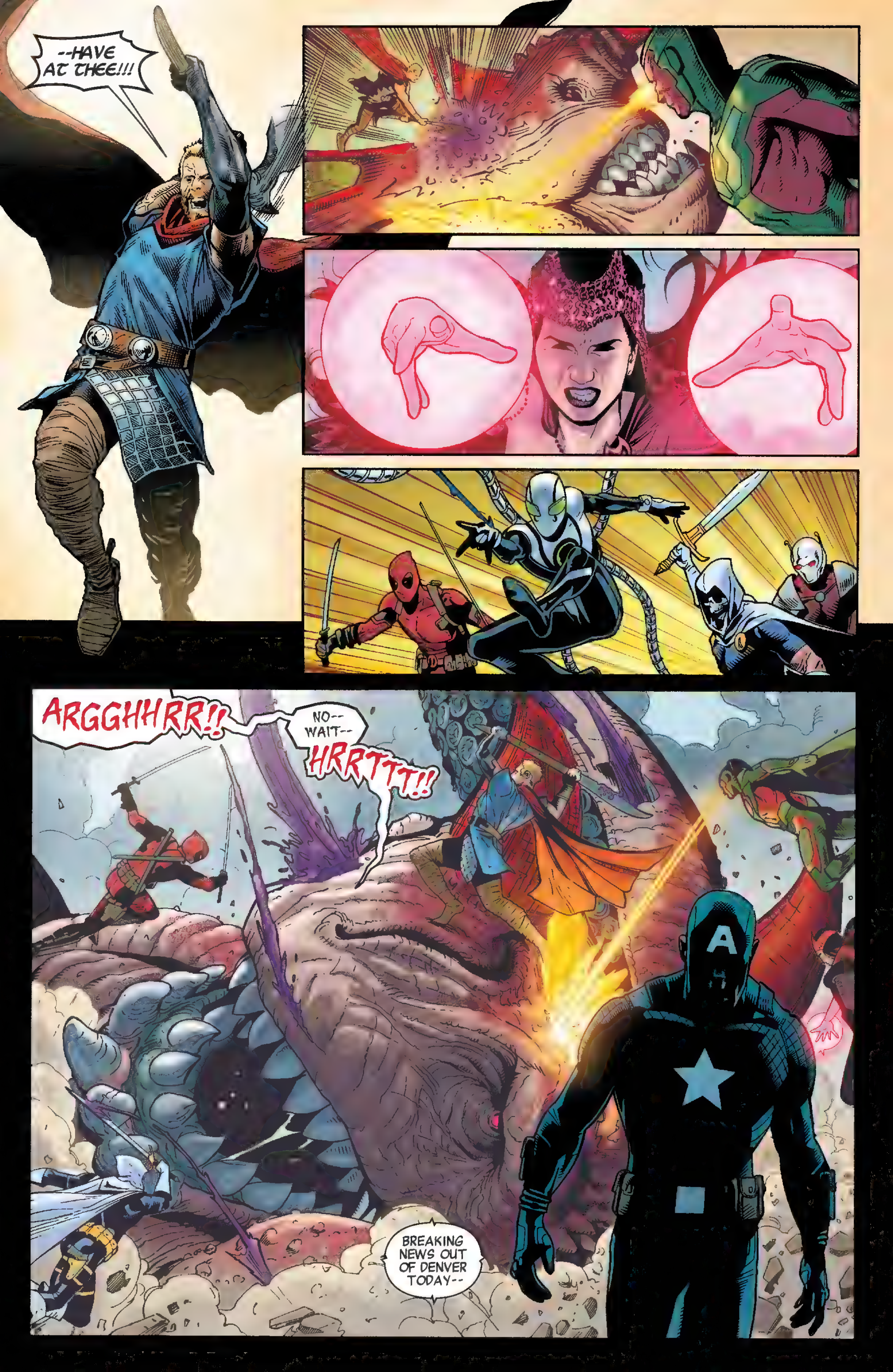

WHAT'S GOING ON, MAN?
WHAT'S--WHAT'S GOING *ON?!* YOU NEED TO GET *AWAY* FROM ME! DON'T YOU SEE THESE GUYS CHASING ME?!
YEAH, WHAT'S THAT ALL ABOUT?
I DON'T *KNOW!* I JUST GOT OFF THE TRAIN--AND THEY WERE *EVERYWHERE!*
HUH. THAT'S WEIRD. YOU MUST'VE DONE *SOMETHING* TO PISS THEM OFF, THOUGH--YOU WITH THE UNDERGROUND OR SOMETHING?
NO! I MEAN--I WAS SUPPOSED TO *MEET* SOMEONE FROM THE UNDERGROUND--BUT THEY DIDN'T SHOW!
OH, THAT MAKES SENSE, THEN--
IT *DOES?!*
YEAH, THE UNDERGROUND DOES THAT. IF THEY'RE SETTING UP A MEETING WITH SOMEONE THAT THEY DON'T KNOW, THEY RAT THEM OUT TO HYDRA, MONITOR THE CHATTER--
*WHY THE HELL WOULD THEY DO THAT?!*
TO MAKE SURE IT'S NOT A *TRAP.*

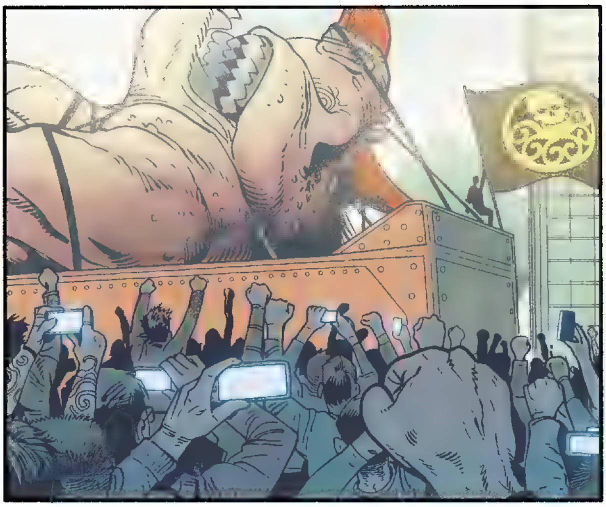

YOU--YOU'RE THE **HULK**. THAT'S GOOD.
WHY "GOOD"?
BECAUSE IF ***ANYONE*** HAS A SPARE SET OF PANTS--
POOR YOU. THAT MUST HAVE BEEN VERY UPSETTING--
--BUT CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR RESCUE!
@#$! WERE YOU THERE THE WHOLE TIME?
YOUR SURPRISE DOES NOT COMPUTE. YOU REQUESTED A MEETING WITH THE UNDERGROUND--
***WE'RE*** THE UNDERGROUND.
WOW. OKAY. OKAY. THIS IS REALLY HAPPENING.
YOU'RE PATRIOT398? FROM THE WEBSITE?
Y-YEAH. MY REAL NAME'S ***RAYSHAUN***. RAYSHAUN LUCAS. I'M FROM NEW YORK--
AND YOU HAVE IT? YOU BROUGHT IT WITH YOU? YOU ***BETTER*** NOT HAVE BEEN BLUFFING--
WHAT? NO.
NO, I GOT IT RIGHT HERE...
THEN NOW WOULD BE A GOOD TIME--
ACTUALLY, IT WOULDN'T BE.
M., CHECK YOUR SCANNERS.
AW, HELL. I SEE 'EM, R.
TIME TO MOVE, PEOPLE--


"--DREADNOUGHTS INCOMING."
DREADNOUGHTS?
KILLER HYDRA ROBOT ARMY. USES ADAPTOID TECH TO FORMULATE COUNTERMEASURES TO OUR POWERS--MAKES THEM PRACTICALLY INVINCIBLE.
SO WHAT DO WE DO?
SAME THING YOU WERE DOING BEFORE--
WE RUN.
EXCEPT THIS TIME, YOU MOVE FASTER.
GET IN THE CAR, LOSERS!!!
DENVER.
COME OUT, COME OUT, LITTLE HUMANS! THERE IS NO NEED TO BE AFRAID!


KRIGORRATH ONLY HUNGERS. THERE IS NO NEED FOR PAIN, OR SUFFERING. ONLY THE EMBRACE OF THE NATURAL ORDER.
YOUR FOREFATHERS WERE KIND ENOUGH TO SATE MY APPETITE WHEN I LAST AWOKE, AND LOOK, STILL YOU BUILD YOUR SILLY LITTLE HOUSES. SO IN THE END, WE ALL BENEFIT!
EXCUSE ME--
ARE YOU DONE? I'M LATE FOR A MEETING.
AH, YOU. YOU ARE THE RULER OF THESE PEOPLE, I PRESUME?
THEY FALL UNDER MY PROTECTION, YES.
GOOD. THEN YOU WILL BE MY *FIRST* MORSEL...
I EXPECT SO. BUT BEFORE YOU GET TO THAT-- I'D LIKE TO MAKE YOU AN *OFFER.*
*OFFER?* WHAT COULD YOU *POSSIBLY* HAVE TO OFFER ME, LITTLE SKINLING?
YOUR LIFE.

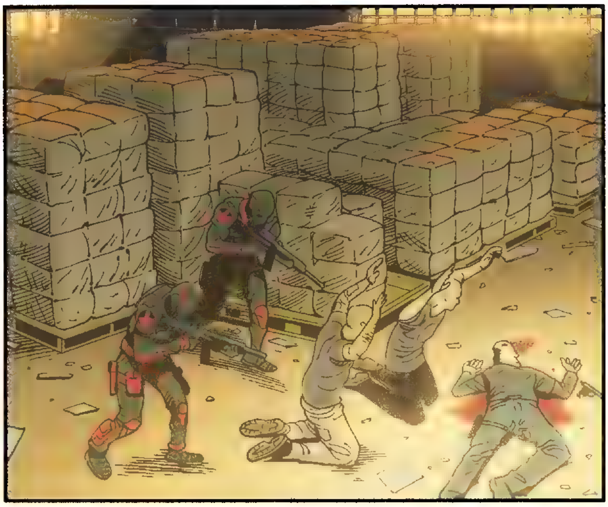

LEAVE THIS CITY. CRAWL BACK INTO WHATEVER HOLE YOU CAME FROM.
DO THAT, AND I WILL FORGIVE THIS TRESPASS YOU'VE COMMITTED AGAINST US.
I UNDERSTAND WHO YOU THINK WE ARE--AND WHY YOU THINK YOU CAN COME HERE AND THREATEN THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN THIS CITY. IT'S HARD TO BLAME YOU, REALLY.
FOR YEARS, THIS WAS TREATED LIKE SOME KIND OF GAME. MEN AND WOMEN IN GARISH COSTUMES WOULD COME AND CHASE YOU AWAY, MAYBE TRY TO LOCK YOU IN SOME CAGE UNTIL YOU INEVITABLY ESCAPED.
SO I NEED TO ASSURE YOU THAT THAT IS NO LONGER THE CASE. THAT I SPEAK FOR THE GLORY OF HYDRA NOW, AND IN HYDRA, WE VALUE STRENGTH AND ORDER ABOVE EVERYTHING ELSE. THERE IS NO ORDER IN THIS.
WHICH MEANS, IF YOU DON'T TAKE MY OFFER, YOU WILL NEVER LEAVE THIS STREET AS ANYTHING BESIDES A TROPHY.
HA HA HA HA HA!
YOUR BLUSTER HAS ENCHANTED ME, LITTLE KING.
I WILL NOT FORGET THE SMILE YOU PUT ON MY FACE WHEN I FEEL YOUR BONES CRUNCH IN MY TEETH.
SO, GO ON THEN--BRING ME YOUR ARMY! PREPARE MY FEAST!
ACTUALLY--I HAVE SOMETHING BETTER THAN AN ARMY.
AVENGERS ASSEMBLE.
MONSTER--


--HAVE AT THEE!!!
ARGGHHRR!!
NO-- WAIT--
HRRTTTT!!
BREAKING NEWS OUT OF DENVER TODAY--

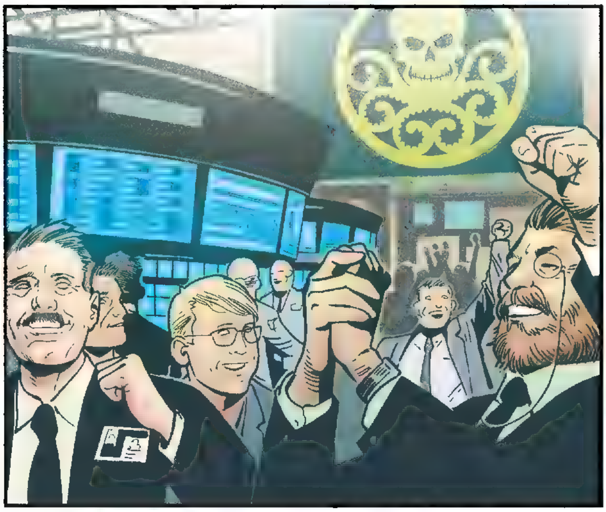


--AS CITIZENS CHEERED ANOTHER AVENGERS VICTORY!

WITH NO CIVILIAN CASUALTIES AND MINIMAL PROPERTY DAMAGE, THE TRIUMPH SEEMED TO COME AT AN IDEAL TIME FOR THE LEADERSHIP--

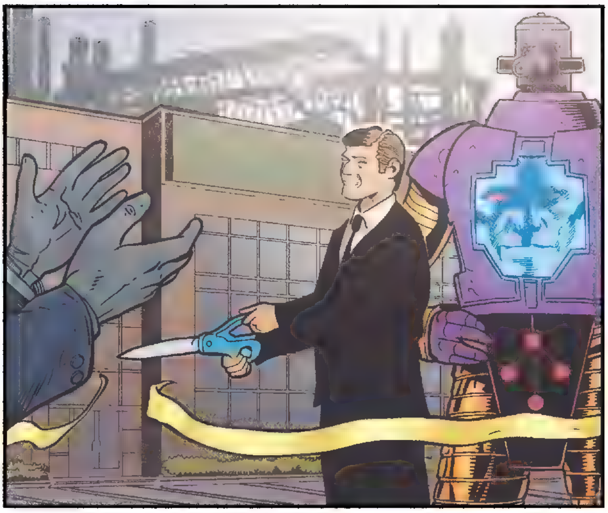


--FRESH ON THE HEELS OF A NEW REPORT SHOWING THAT VIOLENT CRIME IS DOWN NEARLY 75 PERCENT SINCE HYDRA SAVED THE COUNTRY.



IN MARKET NEWS TODAY--

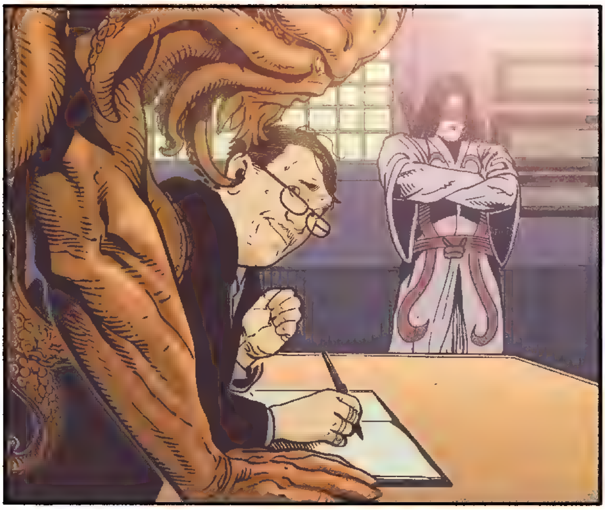
--DOCTOR FAUSTUS WAS ON HAND TO CELEBRATE THE MALICK EXCHANGE HITTING NEW HEIGHTS, BREAKING THE RECORD SET LAST MONTH--AS INVESTORS CHEERED FALLING UNEMPLOYMENT THANKS TO NEW STIMULUS SPENDING--



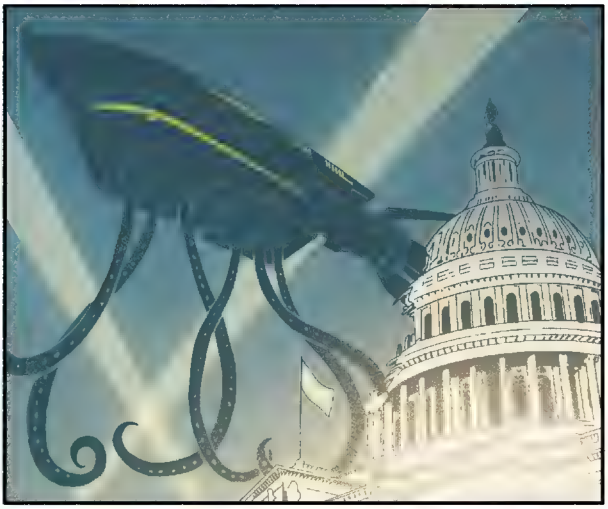
--COURTESY OF THE HYDRA WORKS PROGRAM.

THREE MORE "SHOVEL-READY" PROJECTS WERE ANNOUNCED TODAY, INCLUDING THIS DREADNOUGHT-MANUFACTURING FACILITY IN LITTLE ROCK, EXPECTED TO CREATE OVER 2,000 NEW JOBS.

LEAD HYDRA WORKS OFFICIAL ARNIM ZOLA ATTENDED THE RIBBON CUTTING AND PROMISED THIS WAS ONLY THE BEGINNING.

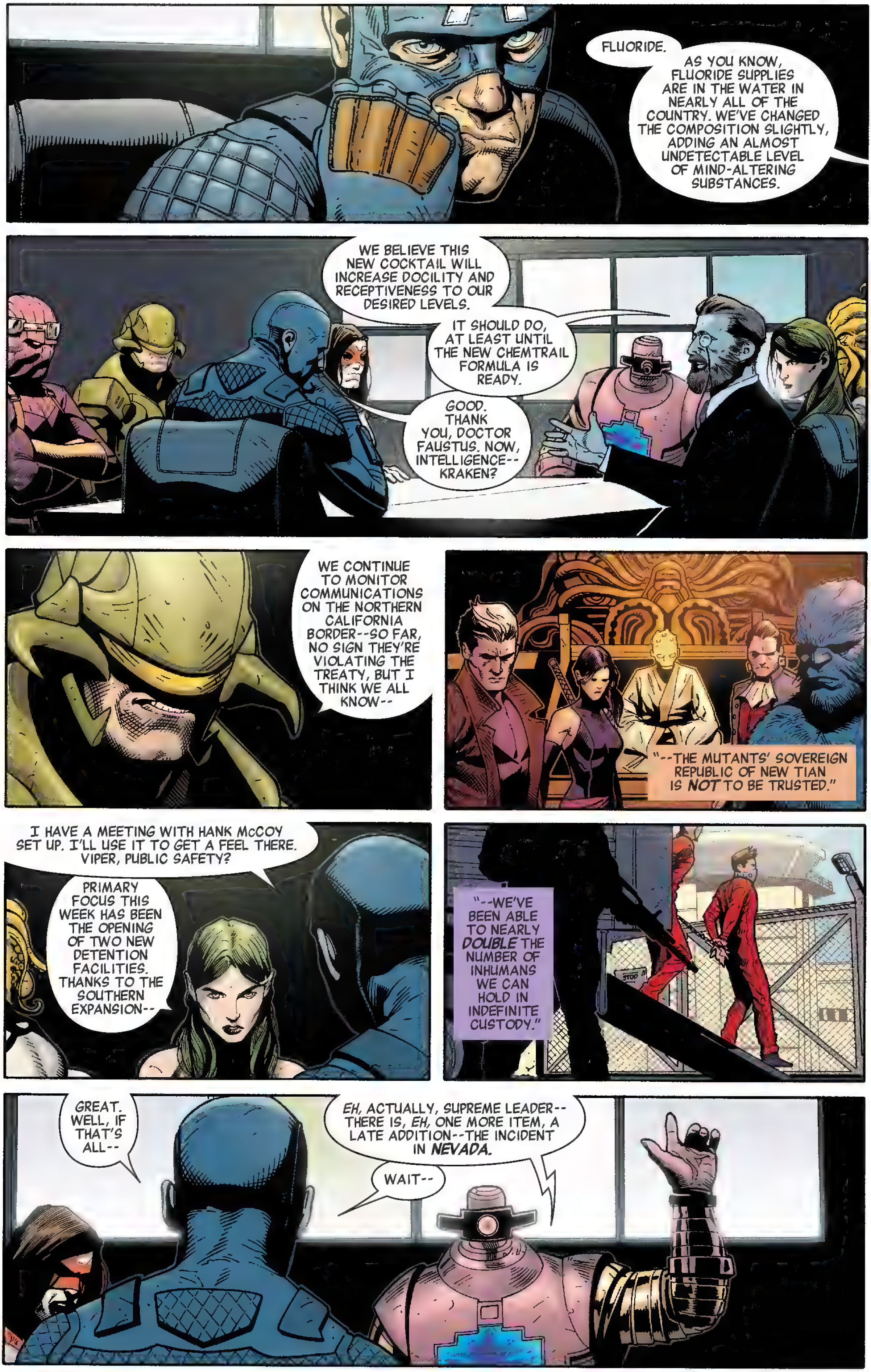


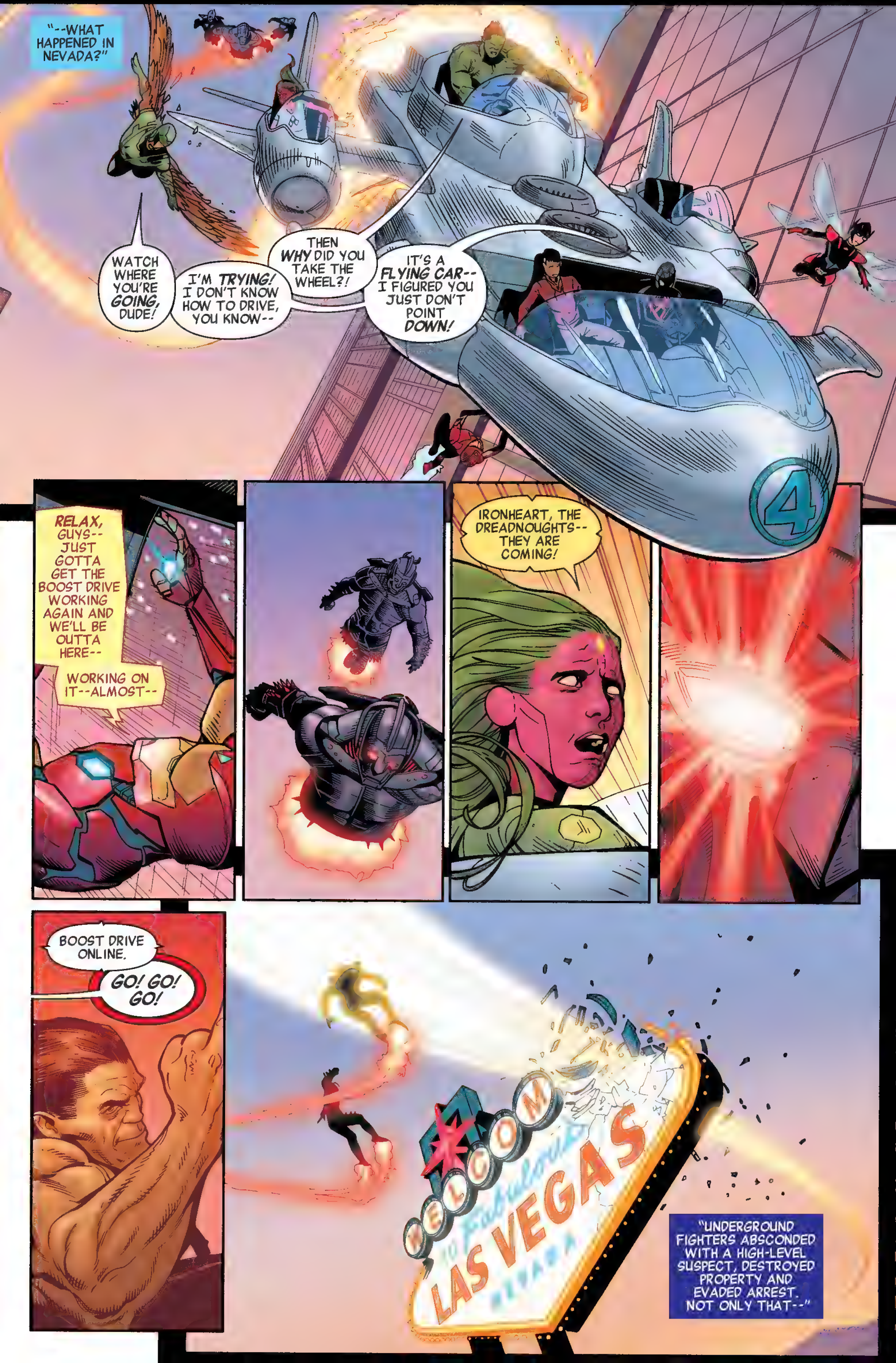
MEANWHILE, IN WORLD NEWS, A NEW TRADE AGREEMENT HAS BEEN SIGNED BETWEEN MADRIPOOR AND U.S. REPRESENTATIVES, WITH OFFICIALS DECLARING A NEW AGE IN HYDRA-PACIFIC RELATIONS--

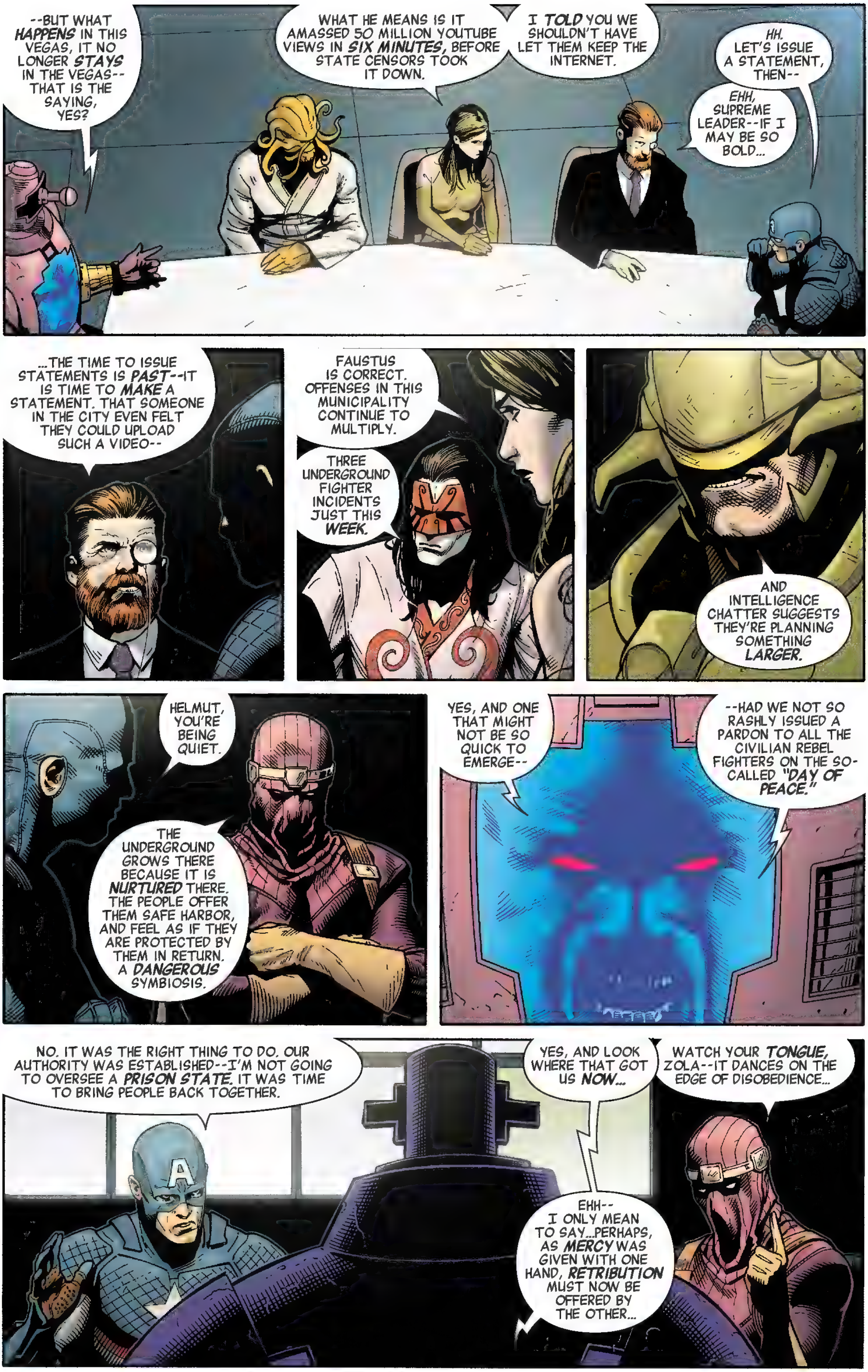


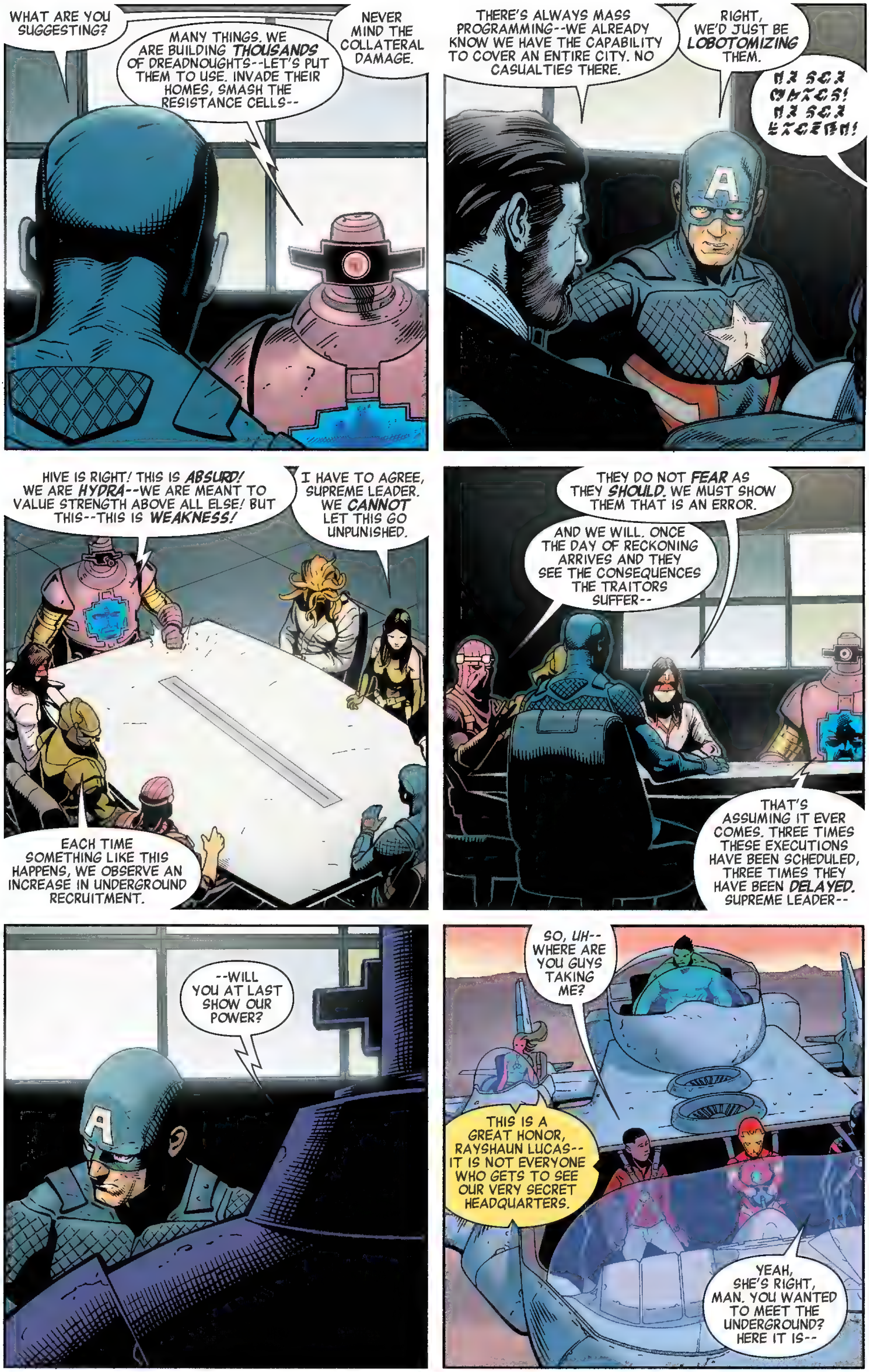
--WHICH WILL SURELY BE A TOPIC OF CONVERSATION THIS AFTERNOON AS THE HYDRA HIGH COUNCIL CONVENES TO DISCUSS NEW NATIONAL DEFENSE STRATEGIES AND THE UPCOMING *DAY OF RECKONING*--WHERE AROUND 20 PEOPLE CONVICTED OF TREASON ARE SET TO FACE THE FIRING SQUAD.

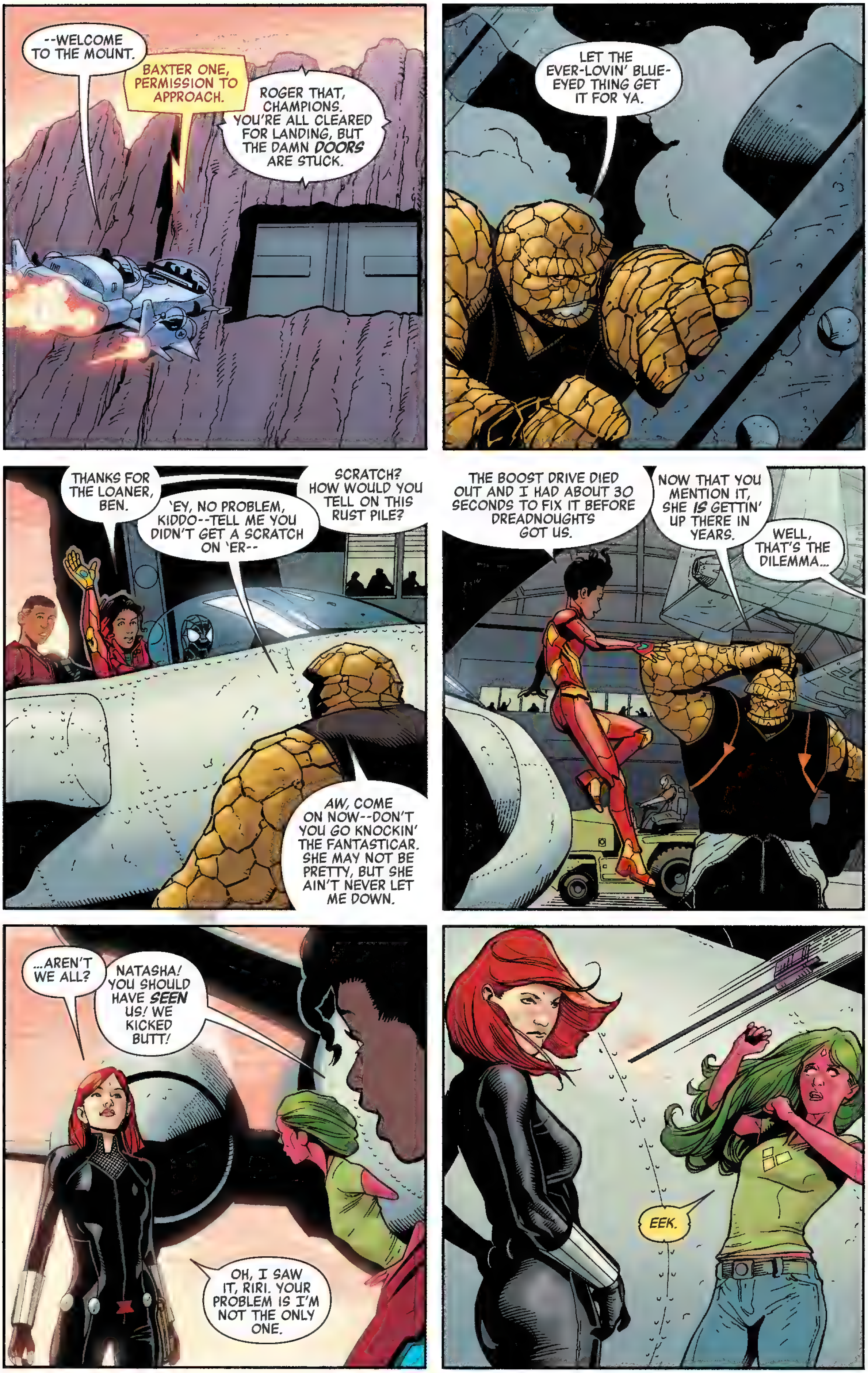
ALSO ON THE AGENDA--

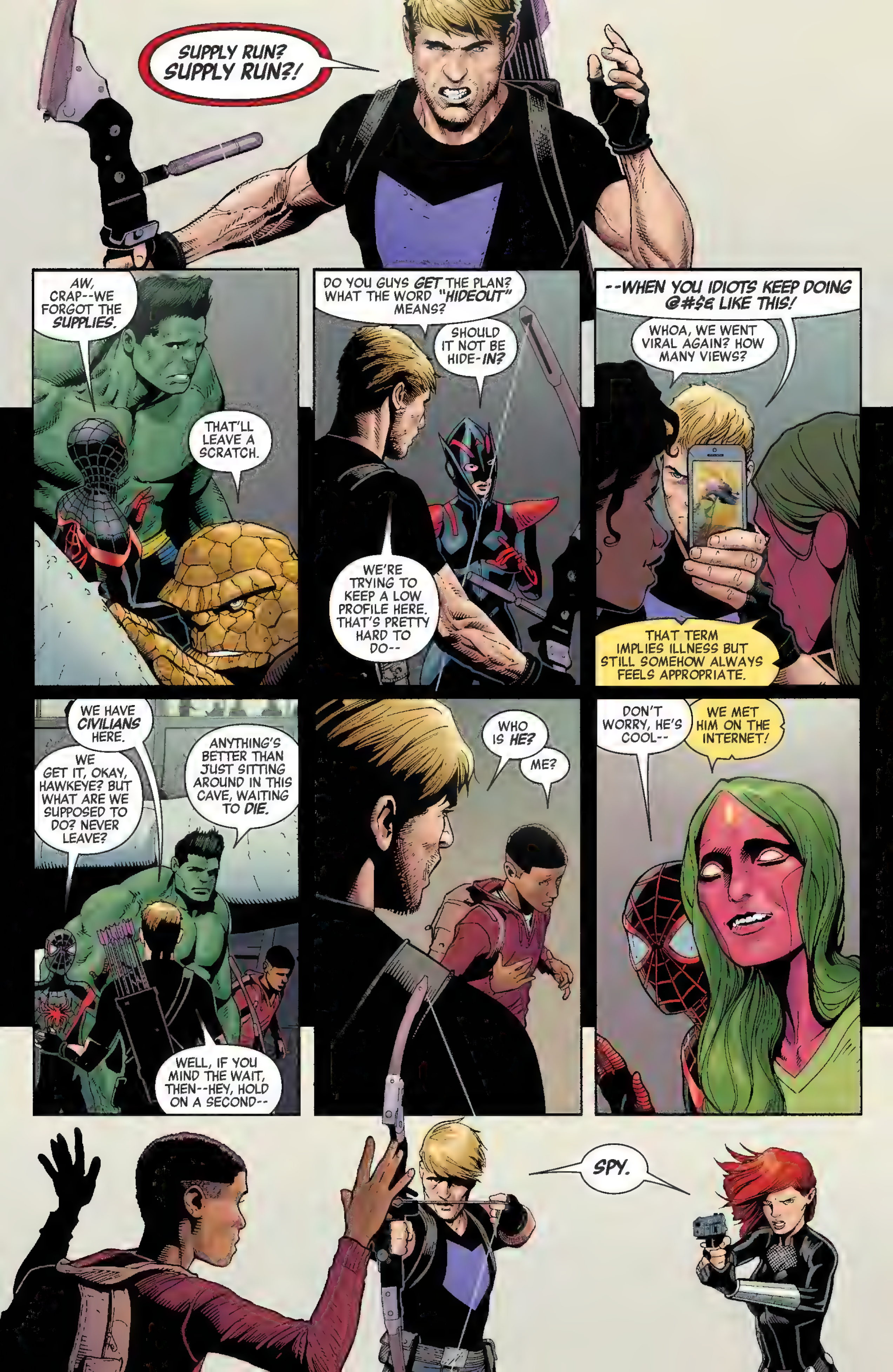

FLUORIDE.
AS YOU KNOW, FLUORIDE SUPPLIES ARE IN THE WATER IN NEARLY ALL OF THE COUNTRY. WE'VE CHANGED THE COMPOSITION SLIGHTLY, ADDING AN ALMOST UNDETECTABLE LEVEL OF MIND-ALTERING SUBSTANCES.
WE BELIEVE THIS NEW COCKTAIL WILL INCREASE DOCILITY AND RECEPTIVENESS TO OUR DESIRED LEVELS.
IT SHOULD DO, AT LEAST UNTIL THE NEW CHEMTRAIL FORMULA IS READY.
GOOD. THANK YOU, DOCTOR FAUSTUS. NOW, INTELLIGENCE-- KRAKEN?
WE CONTINUE TO MONITOR COMMUNICATIONS ON THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BORDER--SO FAR, NO SIGN THEY'RE VIOLATING THE TREATY, BUT I THINK WE ALL KNOW--
"--THE MUTANTS' SOVEREIGN REPUBLIC OF NEW TIAN IS *NOT* TO BE TRUSTED."
I HAVE A MEETING WITH HANK McCOY SET UP. I'LL USE IT TO GET A FEEL THERE. VIPER, PUBLIC SAFETY?
PRIMARY FOCUS THIS WEEK HAS BEEN THE OPENING OF TWO NEW DETENTION FACILITIES. THANKS TO THE SOUTHERN EXPANSION--
"--WE'VE BEEN ABLE TO NEARLY *DOUBLE* THE NUMBER OF INHUMANS WE CAN HOLD IN INDEFINITE CUSTODY."
STOP
GREAT. WELL, IF THAT'S ALL--
EH, ACTUALLY, SUPREME LEADER-- THERE IS, *EH,* ONE MORE ITEM, A LATE ADDITION--THE INCIDENT IN *NEVADA.*
WAIT--

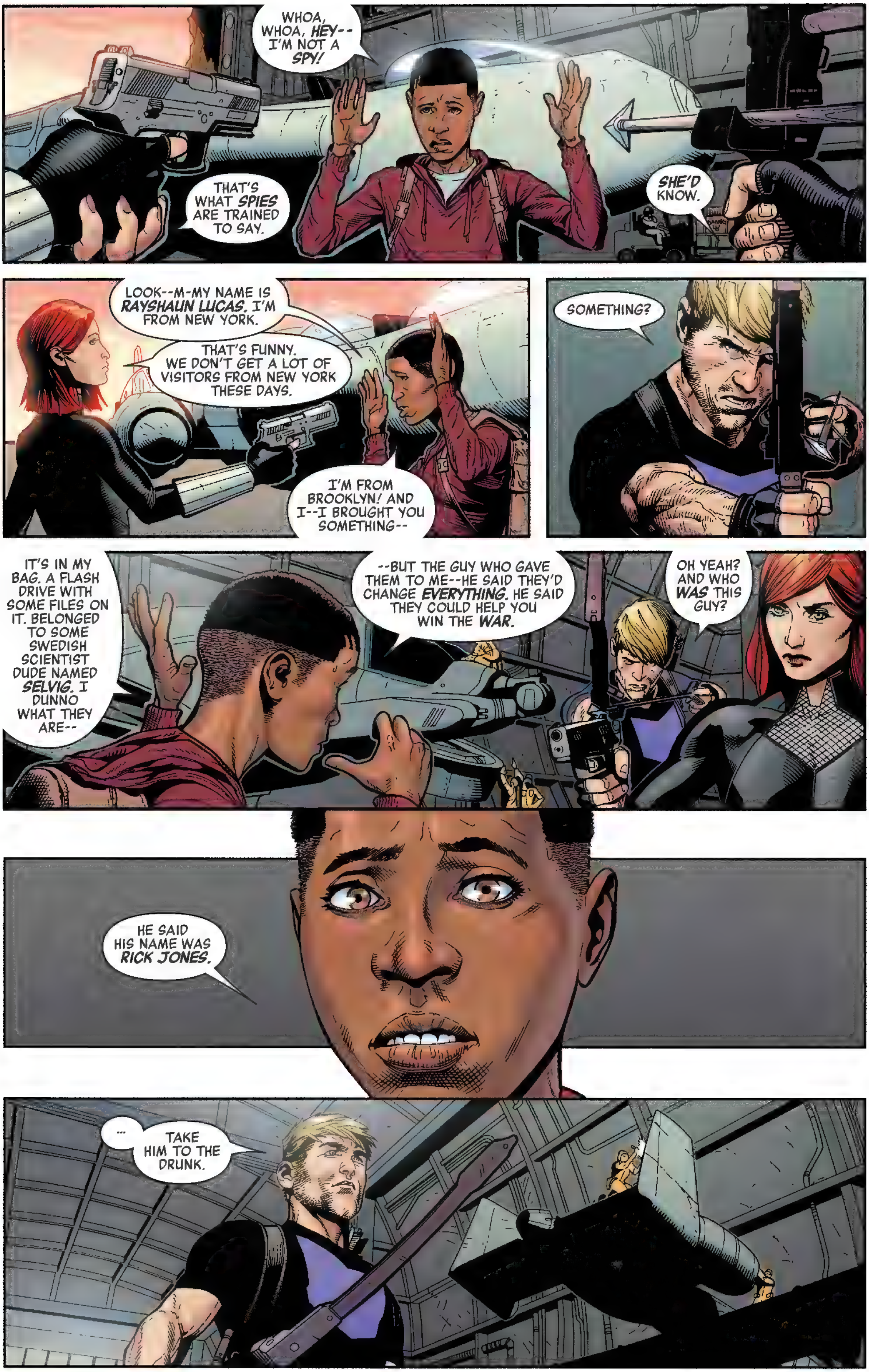

"--WHAT HAPPENED IN NEVADA?"
WATCH WHERE YOU'RE *GOING*, DUDE!
I'M *TRYING!* I DON'T KNOW HOW TO DRIVE, YOU KNOW--
THEN *WHY* DID YOU TAKE THE WHEEL?!
IT'S A *FLYING CAR*-- I FIGURED YOU JUST DON'T POINT *DOWN!*
4
*RELAX,* GUYS-- JUST GOTTA GET THE BOOST DRIVE WORKING AGAIN AND WE'LL BE OUTTA HERE--
WORKING ON IT--ALMOST--
IRONHEART, THE DREADNOUGHTS-- THEY ARE COMING!
BOOST DRIVE ONLINE.
*GO! GO! GO!*
WELCOM
to Fabulous
LAS VEGAS
NEVADA
"UNDERGROUND FIGHTERS ABSCONDED WITH A HIGH-LEVEL SUSPECT, DESTROYED PROPERTY AND EVADED ARREST. NOT ONLY THAT--"

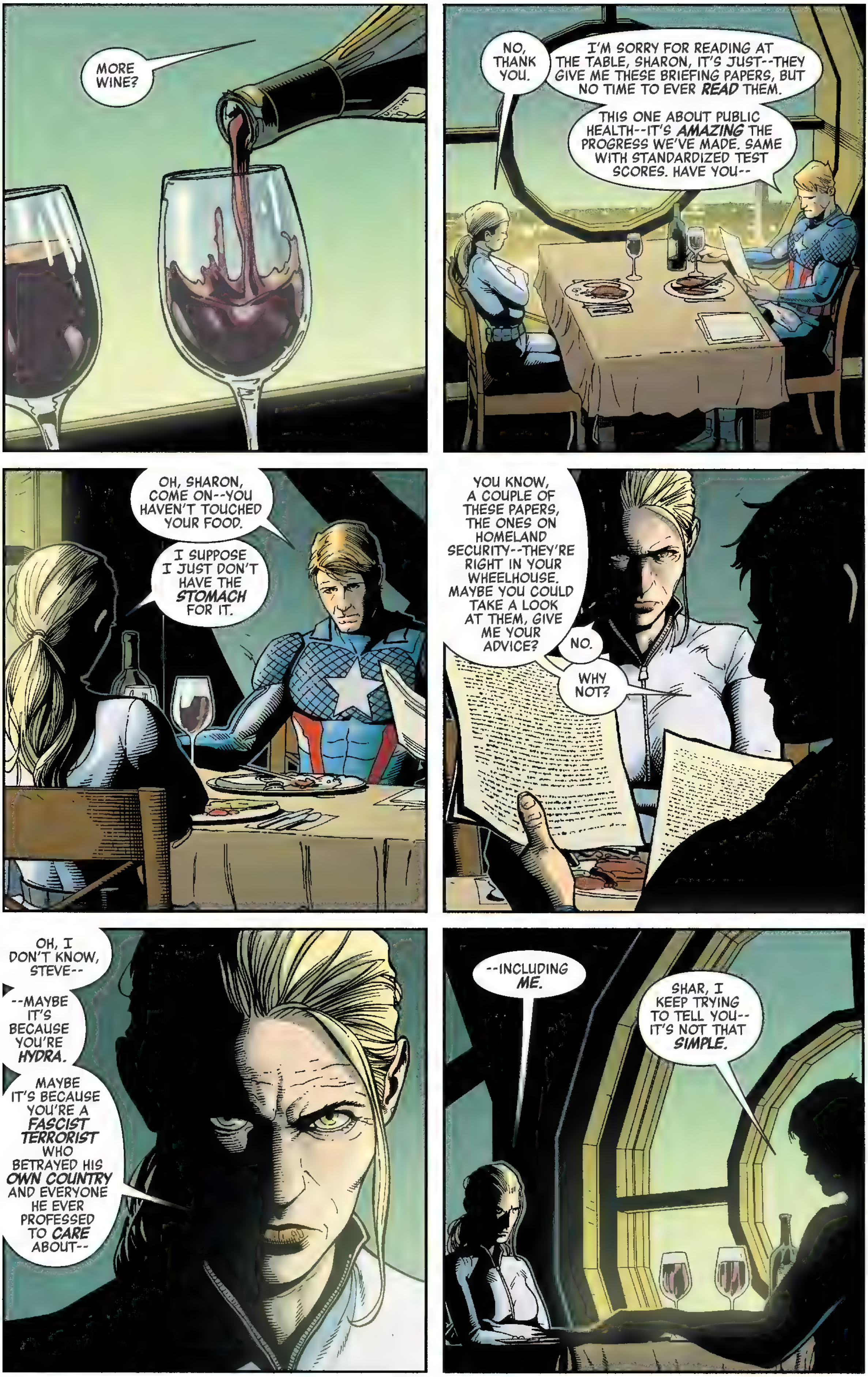

--BUT WHAT *HAPPENS* IN THIS VEGAS, IT NO LONGER *STAYS* IN THE VEGAS--THAT IS THE SAYING, YES?
WHAT HE MEANS IS IT AMASSED 50 MILLION YOUTUBE VIEWS IN *SIX MINUTES*, BEFORE STATE CENSORS TOOK IT DOWN.
I *TOLD* YOU WE SHOULDN'T HAVE LET THEM KEEP THE INTERNET.
HH. LET'S ISSUE A STATEMENT, THEN--
EHH, SUPREME LEADER--IF I MAY BE SO BOLD...
...THE TIME TO ISSUE STATEMENTS IS *PAST*--IT IS TIME TO *MAKE* A STATEMENT. THAT SOMEONE IN THE CITY EVEN FELT THEY COULD UPLOAD SUCH A VIDEO--
FAUSTUS IS CORRECT. OFFENSES IN THIS MUNICIPALITY CONTINUE TO MULTIPLY.
THREE UNDERGROUND FIGHTER INCIDENTS JUST THIS *WEEK*.
AND INTELLIGENCE CHATTER SUGGESTS THEY'RE PLANNING SOMETHING *LARGER*.
HELMUT, YOU'RE BEING QUIET.
THE UNDERGROUND GROWS THERE BECAUSE IT IS *NURTURED* THERE. THE PEOPLE OFFER THEM SAFE HARBOR, AND FEEL AS IF THEY ARE PROTECTED BY THEM IN RETURN. A *DANGEROUS* SYMBIOSIS.
YES, AND ONE THAT MIGHT NOT BE SO QUICK TO EMERGE--
--HAD WE NOT SO RASHLY ISSUED A PARDON TO ALL THE CIVILIAN REBEL FIGHTERS ON THE SO-CALLED *"DAY OF PEACE."*
NO. IT WAS THE RIGHT THING TO DO. OUR AUTHORITY WAS ESTABLISHED--I'M NOT GOING TO OVERSEE A *PRISON STATE*. IT WAS TIME TO BRING PEOPLE BACK TOGETHER.
YES, AND LOOK WHERE THAT GOT US *NOW*...
WATCH YOUR *TONGUE*, ZOLA--IT DANCES ON THE EDGE OF DISOBEDIENCE...
EHH-- I ONLY MEAN TO SAY...PERHAPS, AS *MERCY* WAS GIVEN WITH ONE HAND, *RETRIBUTION* MUST NOW BE OFFERED BY THE OTHER...

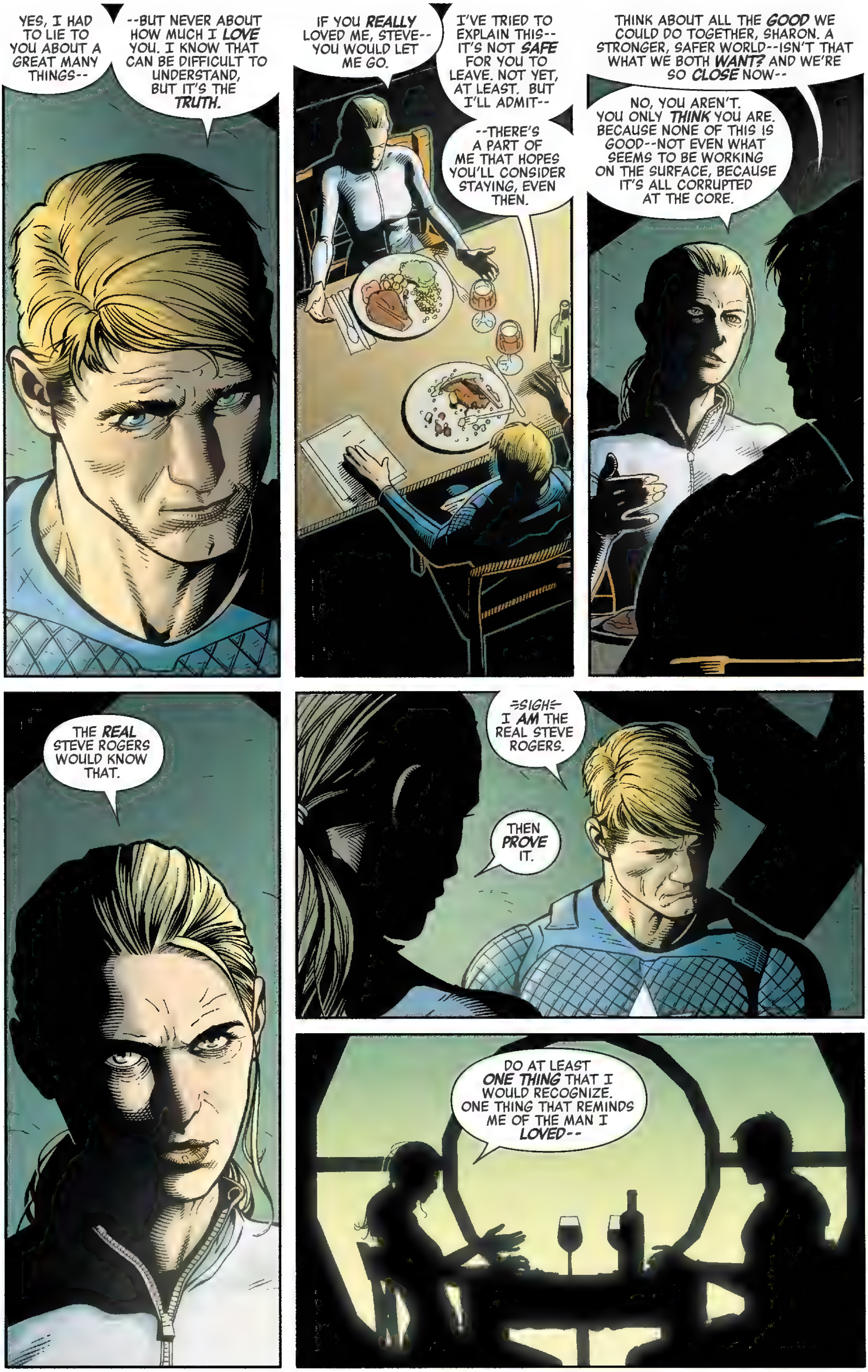

WHAT ARE YOU SUGGESTING?
MANY THINGS. WE ARE BUILDING *THOUSANDS* OF DREADNOUGHTS--LET'S PUT THEM TO USE. INVADE THEIR HOMES, SMASH THE RESISTANCE CELLS--
NEVER MIND THE COLLATERAL DAMAGE.
THERE'S ALWAYS MASS PROGRAMMING--WE ALREADY KNOW WE HAVE THE CAPABILITY TO COVER AN ENTIRE CITY. NO CASUALTIES THERE.
RIGHT, WE'D JUST BE *LOBOTOMIZING* THEM.
HIVE IS RIGHT! THIS IS *ABSURD!* WE ARE *HYDRA*--WE ARE MEANT TO VALUE STRENGTH ABOVE ALL ELSE! BUT THIS--THIS IS *WEAKNESS!*
I HAVE TO AGREE, SUPREME LEADER. WE *CANNOT* LET THIS GO UNPUNISHED.
EACH TIME SOMETHING LIKE THIS HAPPENS, WE OBSERVE AN INCREASE IN UNDERGROUND RECRUITMENT.
THEY DO NOT *FEAR* AS THEY *SHOULD*. WE MUST SHOW THEM THAT IS AN ERROR.
AND WE WILL. ONCE THE DAY OF RECKONING ARRIVES AND THEY SEE THE CONSEQUENCES THE TRAITORS SUFFER--
THAT'S ASSUMING IT EVER COMES. THREE TIMES THESE EXECUTIONS HAVE BEEN SCHEDULED, THREE TIMES THEY HAVE BEEN *DELAYED*. SUPREME LEADER--
--WILL YOU AT LAST SHOW OUR POWER?
SO, UH-- WHERE ARE YOU GUYS TAKING ME?
THIS IS A GREAT HONOR, RAYSHAUN LUCAS-- IT IS NOT EVERYONE WHO GETS TO SEE OUR VERY SECRET HEADQUARTERS.
YEAH, SHE'S RIGHT, MAN. YOU WANTED TO MEET THE UNDERGROUND? HERE IT IS--

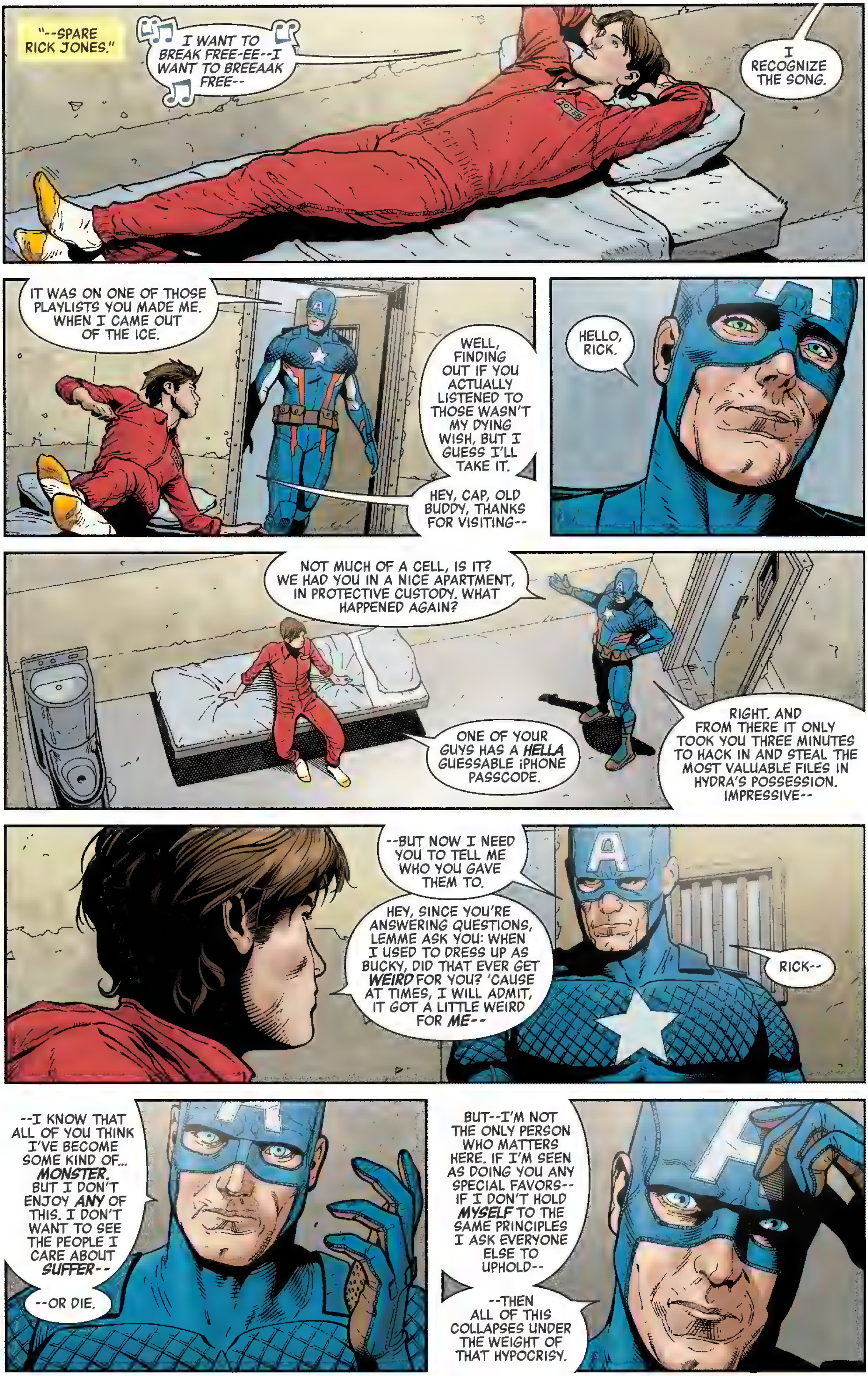

--WELCOME TO THE MOUNT.
BAXTER ONE, PERMISSION TO APPROACH.
ROGER THAT, CHAMPIONS. YOU'RE ALL CLEARED FOR LANDING, BUT THE DAMN DOORS ARE STUCK.
LET THE EVER-LOVIN' BLUE-EYED THING GET IT FOR YA.
THANKS FOR THE LOANER, BEN.
'EY, NO PROBLEM, KIDDO--TELL ME YOU DIDN'T GET A SCRATCH ON 'ER--
SCRATCH? HOW WOULD YOU TELL ON THIS RUST PILE?
AW, COME ON NOW--DON'T YOU GO KNOCKIN' THE FANTASTICAR. SHE MAY NOT BE PRETTY, BUT SHE AIN'T NEVER LET ME DOWN.
THE BOOST DRIVE DIED OUT AND I HAD ABOUT 30 SECONDS TO FIX IT BEFORE DREADNOUGHTS GOT US.
NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT, SHE IS GETTIN' UP THERE IN YEARS.
WELL, THAT'S THE DILEMMA...
...AREN'T WE ALL?
NATASHA! YOU SHOULD HAVE SEEN US! WE KICKED BUTT!
OH, I SAW IT, RIRI. YOUR PROBLEM IS I'M NOT THE ONLY ONE.
EEK.

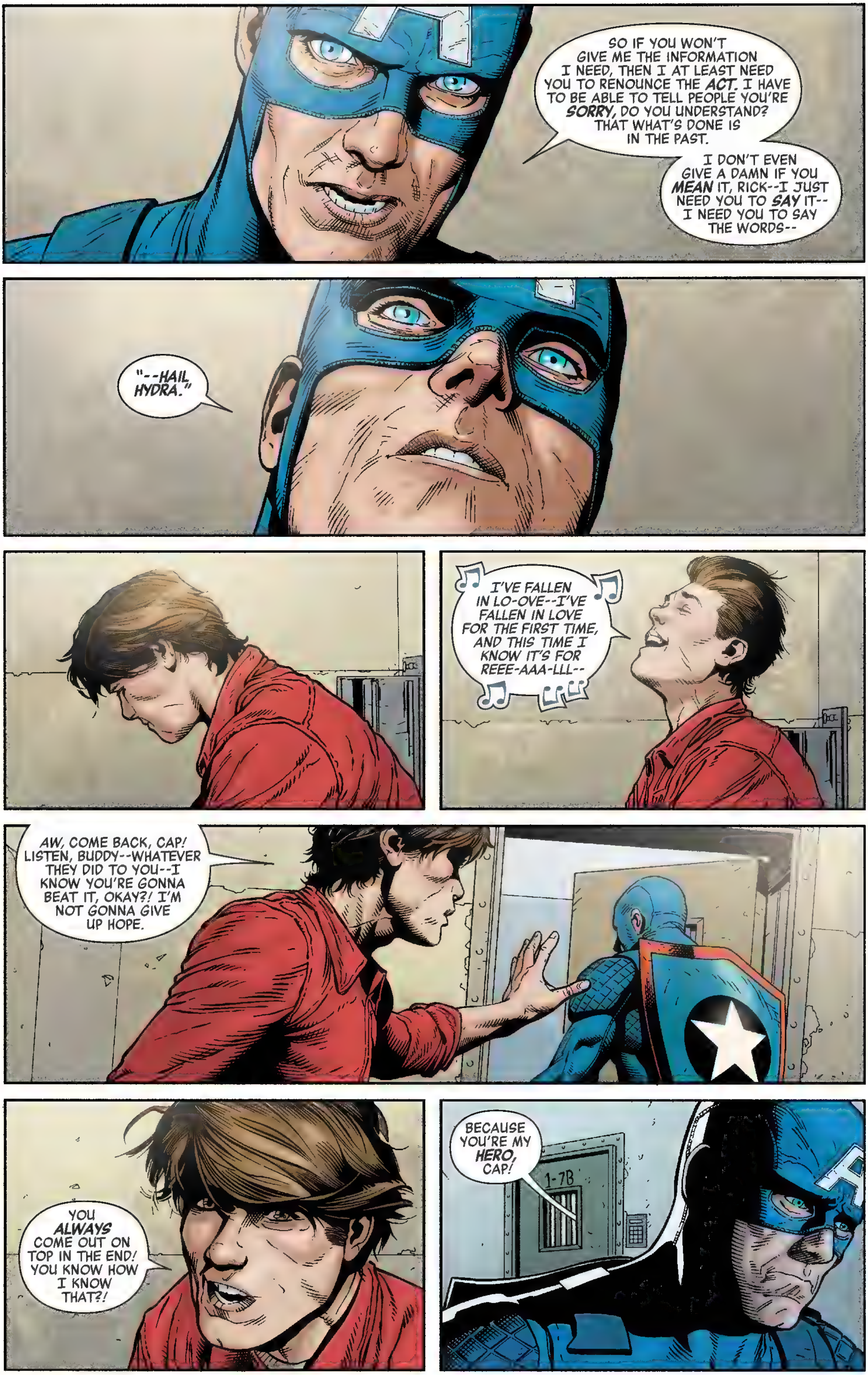

SUPPLY RUN? SUPPLY RUN?!
AW, CRAP--WE FORGOT THE SUPPLIES.
THAT'LL LEAVE A SCRATCH.
DO YOU GUYS GET THE PLAN? WHAT THE WORD "HIDEOUT" MEANS?
SHOULD IT NOT BE HIDE-IN?
WE'RE TRYING TO KEEP A LOW PROFILE HERE. THAT'S PRETTY HARD TO DO--
--WHEN YOU IDIOTS KEEP DOING @#$& LIKE THIS!
WHOA, WE WENT VIRAL AGAIN? HOW MANY VIEWS?
THAT TERM IMPLIES ILLNESS BUT STILL SOMEHOW ALWAYS FEELS APPROPRIATE.
WE HAVE CIVILIANS HERE.
WE GET IT, OKAY, HAWKEYE? BUT WHAT ARE WE SUPPOSED TO DO? NEVER LEAVE?
ANYTHING'S BETTER THAN JUST SITTING AROUND IN THIS CAVE, WAITING TO DIE.
WELL, IF YOU MIND THE WAIT, THEN--HEY, HOLD ON A SECOND--
WHO IS HE?
ME?
DON'T WORRY, HE'S COOL--
WE MET HIM ON THE INTERNET!
SPY.


WHOA, WHOA, HEY-- I'M NOT A SPY!
THAT'S WHAT SPIES ARE TRAINED TO SAY.
SHE'D KNOW.
LOOK--M-MY NAME IS RAYSHAUN LUCAS. I'M FROM NEW YORK.
THAT'S FUNNY. WE DON'T GET A LOT OF VISITORS FROM NEW YORK THESE DAYS.
I'M FROM BROOKLYN! AND I--I BROUGHT YOU SOMETHING--
SOMETHING?
IT'S IN MY BAG. A FLASH DRIVE WITH SOME FILES ON IT. BELONGED TO SOME SWEDISH SCIENTIST DUDE NAMED SELVIG. I DUNNO WHAT THEY ARE--
--BUT THE GUY WHO GAVE THEM TO ME--HE SAID THEY'D CHANGE EVERYTHING. HE SAID THEY COULD HELP YOU WIN THE WAR.
OH YEAH? AND WHO WAS THIS GUY?
HE SAID HIS NAME WAS RICK JONES.
...
TAKE HIM TO THE DRUNK.


MORE WINE?
NO, THANK YOU.
I'M SORRY FOR READING AT THE TABLE, SHARON, IT'S JUST--THEY GIVE ME THESE BRIEFING PAPERS, BUT NO TIME TO EVER *READ* THEM.
THIS ONE ABOUT PUBLIC HEALTH--IT'S *AMAZING* THE PROGRESS WE'VE MADE. SAME WITH STANDARDIZED TEST SCORES. HAVE YOU--
OH, SHARON, COME ON--YOU HAVEN'T TOUCHED YOUR FOOD.
I SUPPOSE I JUST DON'T HAVE THE *STOMACH* FOR IT.
YOU KNOW, A COUPLE OF THESE PAPERS, THE ONES ON HOMELAND SECURITY--THEY'RE RIGHT IN YOUR WHEELHOUSE. MAYBE YOU COULD TAKE A LOOK AT THEM, GIVE ME YOUR ADVICE?
NO.
WHY NOT?
OH, I DON'T KNOW, STEVE--
--MAYBE IT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE *HYDRA.*
MAYBE IT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE A *FASCIST TERRORIST* WHO BETRAYED HIS *OWN COUNTRY* AND EVERYONE HE EVER PROFESSED TO *CARE* ABOUT--
--INCLUDING *ME.*
SHAR, I KEEP TRYING TO TELL YOU--IT'S NOT THAT *SIMPLE.*


YES, I HAD TO LIE TO YOU ABOUT A GREAT MANY THINGS--
--BUT NEVER ABOUT HOW MUCH I *LOVE* YOU. I KNOW THAT CAN BE DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND, BUT IT'S THE *TRUTH.*
IF YOU *REALLY* LOVED ME, STEVE--YOU WOULD LET ME GO.
I'VE TRIED TO EXPLAIN THIS--IT'S NOT *SAFE* FOR YOU TO LEAVE. NOT YET, AT LEAST. BUT I'LL ADMIT--
--THERE'S A PART OF ME THAT HOPES YOU'LL CONSIDER STAYING, EVEN THEN.
THINK ABOUT ALL THE *GOOD* WE COULD DO TOGETHER, SHARON. A STRONGER, SAFER WORLD--ISN'T THAT WHAT WE BOTH *WANT?* AND WE'RE SO *CLOSE* NOW--
NO, YOU AREN'T. YOU ONLY *THINK* YOU ARE. BECAUSE NONE OF THIS IS GOOD--NOT EVEN WHAT SEEMS TO BE WORKING ON THE SURFACE, BECAUSE IT'S ALL CORRUPTED AT THE CORE.
THE *REAL* STEVE ROGERS WOULD KNOW THAT.
=SIGH= I *AM* THE REAL STEVE ROGERS.
THEN *PROVE* IT.
DO AT LEAST *ONE THING* THAT I WOULD RECOGNIZE. ONE THING THAT REMINDS ME OF THE MAN I *LOVED*--


"--SPARE RICK JONES."
I WANT TO BREAK FREE-EE--I WANT TO BREEAAK FREE--
I RECOGNIZE THE SONG.
IT WAS ON ONE OF THOSE PLAYLISTS YOU MADE ME. WHEN I CAME OUT OF THE ICE.
WELL, FINDING OUT IF YOU ACTUALLY LISTENED TO THOSE WASN'T MY DYING WISH, BUT I GUESS I'LL TAKE IT.
HEY, CAP, OLD BUDDY, THANKS FOR VISITING--
HELLO, RICK.
NOT MUCH OF A CELL, IS IT? WE HAD YOU IN A NICE APARTMENT, IN PROTECTIVE CUSTODY. WHAT HAPPENED AGAIN?
ONE OF YOUR GUYS HAS A HELLA GUESSABLE iPHONE PASSCODE.
RIGHT. AND FROM THERE IT ONLY TOOK YOU THREE MINUTES TO HACK IN AND STEAL THE MOST VALUABLE FILES IN HYDRA'S POSSESSION. IMPRESSIVE--
--BUT NOW I NEED YOU TO TELL ME WHO YOU GAVE THEM TO.
HEY, SINCE YOU'RE ANSWERING QUESTIONS, LEMME ASK YOU: WHEN I USED TO DRESS UP AS BUCKY, DID THAT EVER GET WEIRD FOR YOU? 'CAUSE AT TIMES, I WILL ADMIT, IT GOT A LITTLE WEIRD FOR ME--
RICK--
--I KNOW THAT ALL OF YOU THINK I'VE BECOME SOME KIND OF... MONSTER. BUT I DON'T ENJOY ANY OF THIS. I DON'T WANT TO SEE THE PEOPLE I CARE ABOUT SUFFER--
--OR DIE.
BUT--I'M NOT THE ONLY PERSON WHO MATTERS HERE. IF I'M SEEN AS DOING YOU ANY SPECIAL FAVORS--IF I DON'T HOLD MYSELF TO THE SAME PRINCIPLES I ASK EVERYONE ELSE TO UPHOLD--
--THEN ALL OF THIS COLLAPSES UNDER THE WEIGHT OF THAT HYPOCRISY.


SO IF YOU WON'T GIVE ME THE INFORMATION I NEED, THEN I AT LEAST NEED YOU TO RENOUNCE THE ***ACT.*** I HAVE TO BE ABLE TO TELL PEOPLE YOU'RE ***SORRY,*** DO YOU UNDERSTAND? THAT WHAT'S DONE IS IN THE PAST.
I DON'T EVEN GIVE A DAMN IF YOU ***MEAN*** IT, RICK--I JUST NEED YOU TO ***SAY*** IT--I NEED YOU TO SAY THE WORDS--
"--HAIL HYDRA."
I'VE FALLEN IN LO-OVE--I'VE FALLEN IN LOVE FOR THE FIRST TIME, AND THIS TIME I KNOW IT'S FOR REEE-AAA-LLL--
AW, COME BACK, CAP! LISTEN, BUDDY--WHATEVER THEY DID TO YOU--I KNOW YOU'RE GONNA BEAT IT, OKAY?! I'M NOT GONNA GIVE UP HOPE.
YOU ***ALWAYS*** COME OUT ON TOP IN THE END! YOU KNOW HOW I KNOW THAT?!
BECAUSE YOU'RE MY ***HERO,*** CAP!
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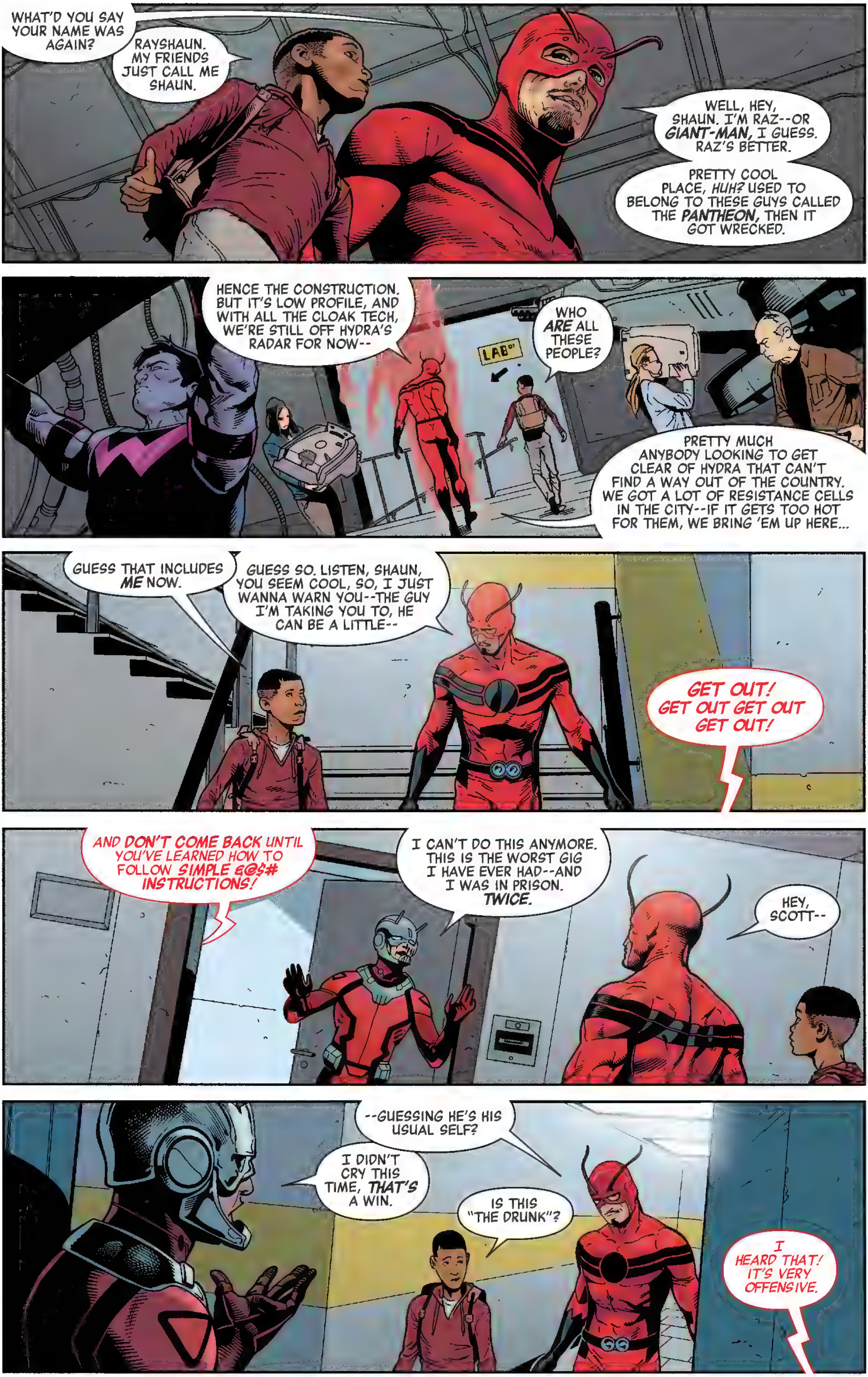
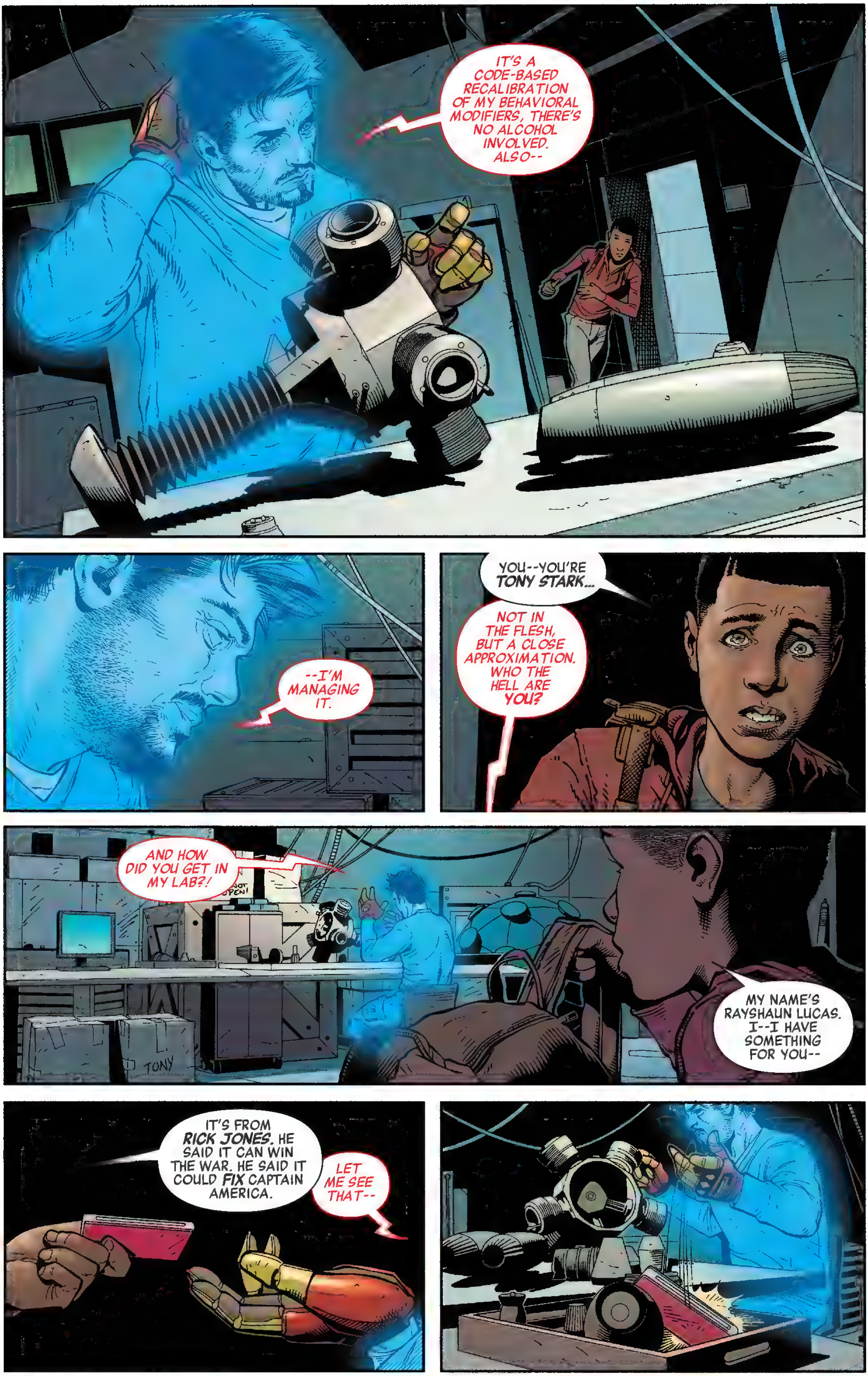
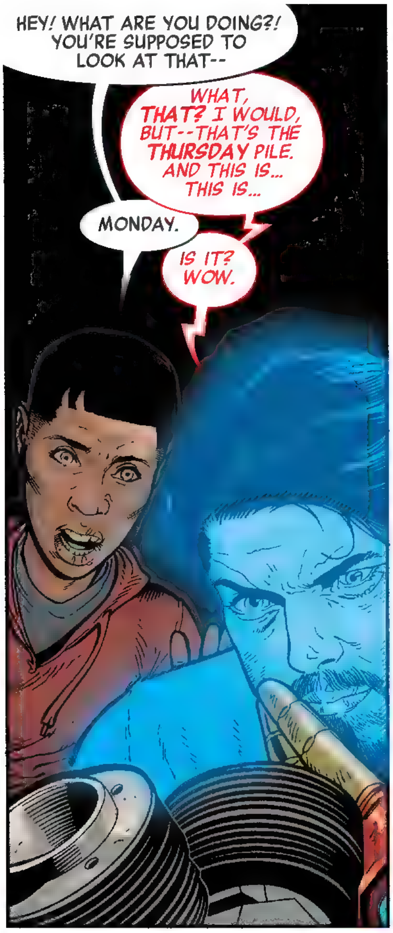
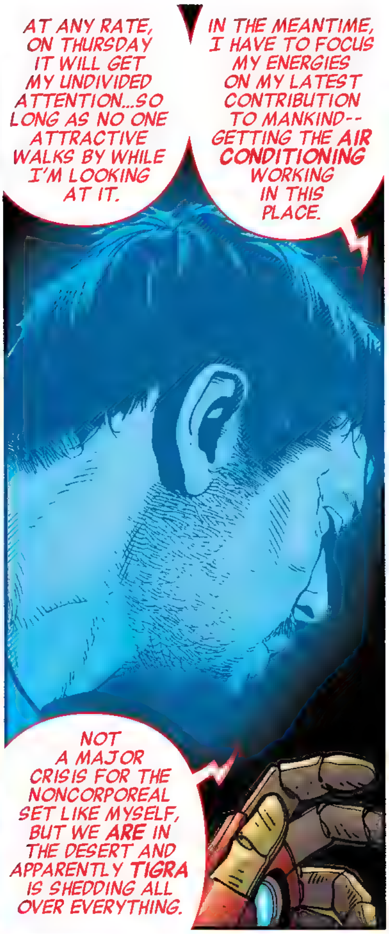
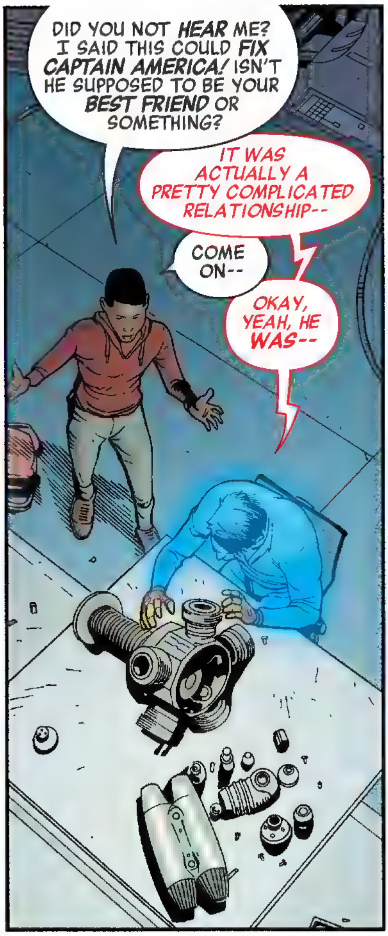
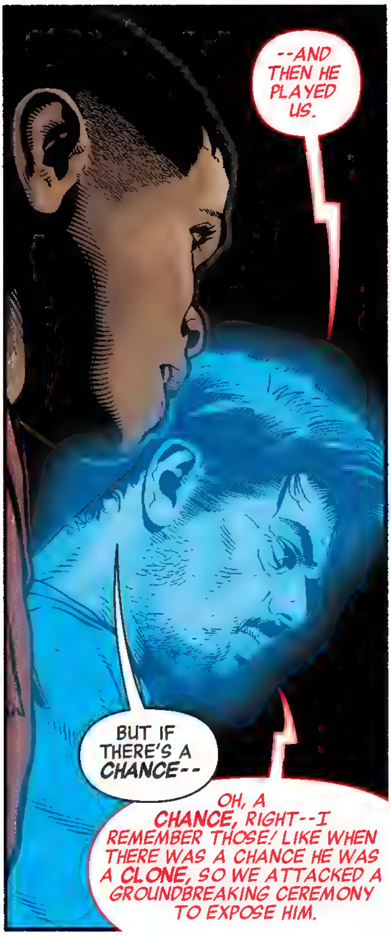

WHAT'D YOU SAY YOUR NAME WAS AGAIN?
RAYSHAUN. MY FRIENDS JUST CALL ME SHAUN.
WELL, HEY, SHAUN. I'M RAZ--OR GIANT-MAN, I GUESS. RAZ'S BETTER.
PRETTY COOL PLACE, HUH? USED TO BELONG TO THESE GUYS CALLED THE PANTHEON, THEN IT GOT WRECKED.
HENCE THE CONSTRUCTION. BUT IT'S LOW PROFILE, AND WITH ALL THE CLOAK TECH, WE'RE STILL OFF HYDRA'S RADAR FOR NOW--
LAB
WHO ARE ALL THESE PEOPLE?
PRETTY MUCH ANYBODY LOOKING TO GET CLEAR OF HYDRA THAT CAN'T FIND A WAY OUT OF THE COUNTRY. WE GOT A LOT OF RESISTANCE CELLS IN THE CITY--IF IT GETS TOO HOT FOR THEM, WE BRING 'EM UP HERE...
GUESS THAT INCLUDES ME NOW.
GUESS SO. LISTEN, SHAUN, YOU SEEM COOL, SO, I JUST WANNA WARN YOU--THE GUY I'M TAKING YOU TO, HE CAN BE A LITTLE--
GET OUT! GET OUT GET OUT GET OUT!
AND DON'T COME BACK UNTIL YOU'VE LEARNED HOW TO FOLLOW SIMPLE &@$# INSTRUCTIONS!
I CAN'T DO THIS ANYMORE. THIS IS THE WORST GIG I HAVE EVER HAD--AND I WAS IN PRISON. TWICE.
HEY, SCOTT--
--GUESSING HE'S HIS USUAL SELF?
I DIDN'T CRY THIS TIME, THAT'S A WIN.
IS THIS "THE DRUNK"?
I HEARD THAT! IT'S VERY OFFENSIVE.

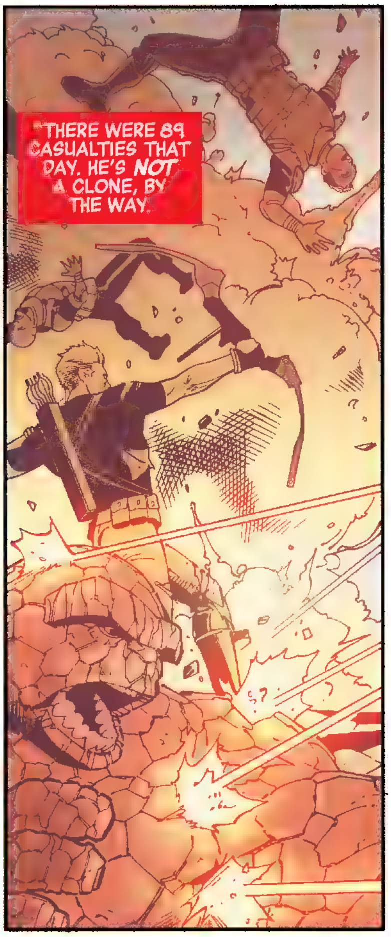

IT'S A CODE-BASED RECALIBRATION OF MY BEHAVIORAL MODIFIERS, THERE'S NO ALCOHOL INVOLVED. ALSO--
--I'M MANAGING IT.
YOU--YOU'RE **TONY STARK**...
NOT IN THE FLESH, BUT A CLOSE APPROXIMATION. WHO THE HELL ARE **YOU?**
AND HOW DID YOU GET IN MY LAB?!
NOT OPEN!
TONY
MY NAME'S RAYSHAUN LUCAS. I--I HAVE SOMETHING FOR YOU--
IT'S FROM **RICK JONES**. HE SAID IT CAN WIN THE WAR. HE SAID IT COULD **FIX** CAPTAIN AMERICA.
LET ME SEE THAT--

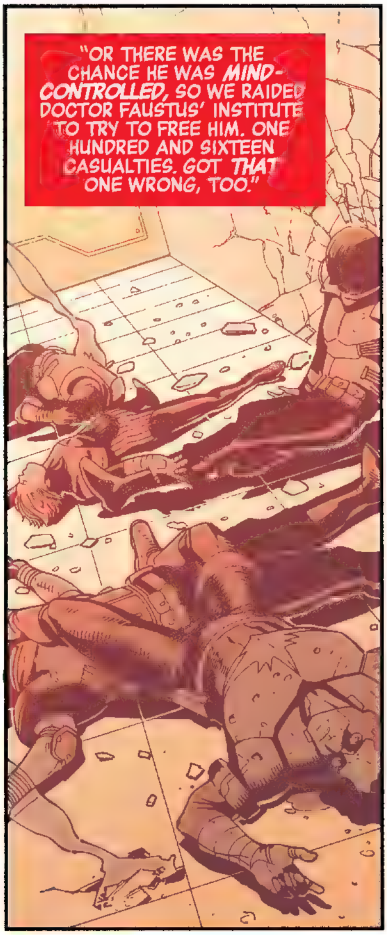

HEY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?! YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO LOOK AT THAT--
WHAT, THAT? I WOULD, BUT--THAT'S THE THURSDAY PILE. AND THIS IS... THIS IS...
MONDAY.
IS IT? WOW.

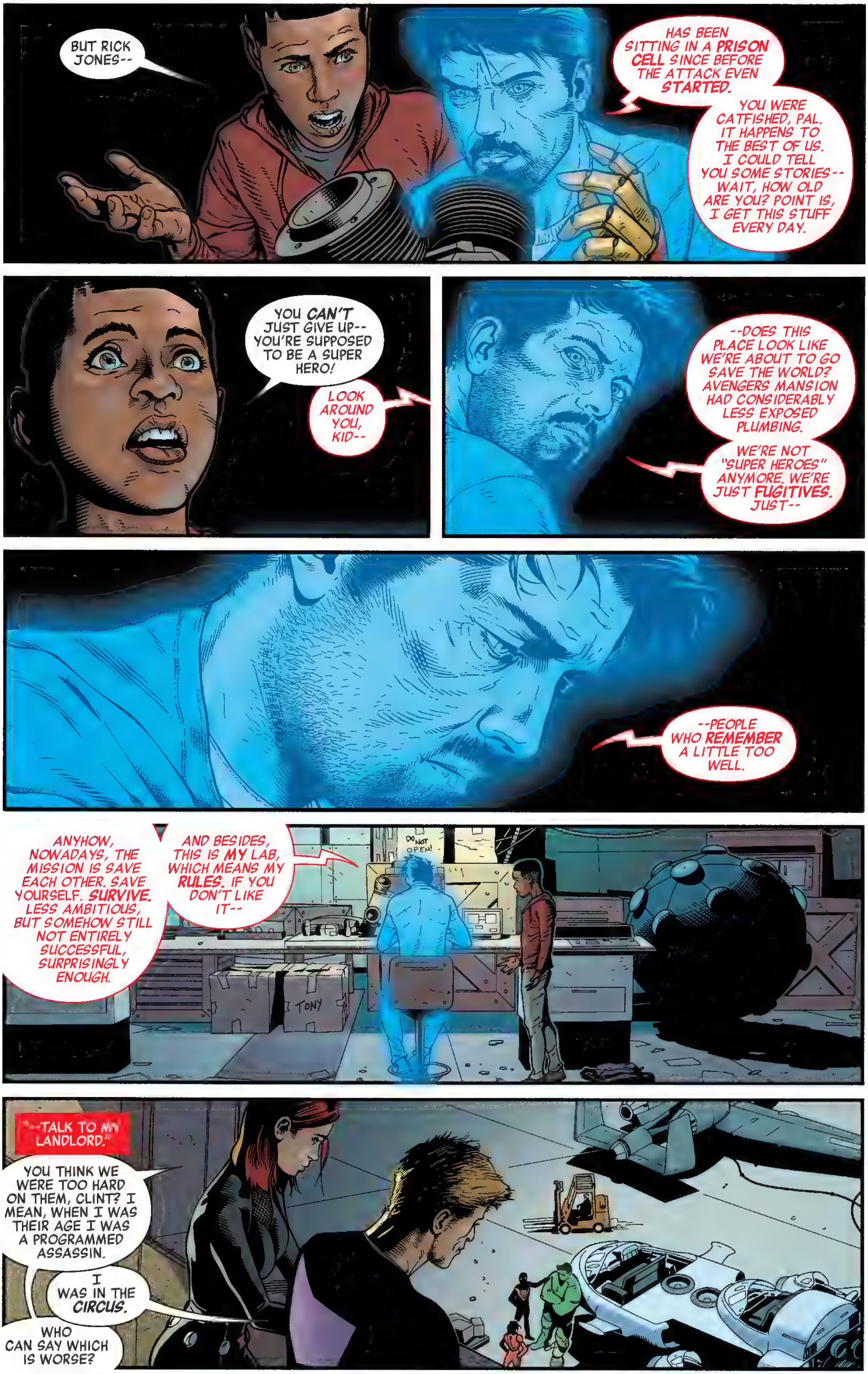

AT ANY RATE, ON THURSDAY IT WILL GET MY UNDIVIDED ATTENTION...SO LONG AS NO ONE ATTRACTIVE WALKS BY WHILE I'M LOOKING AT IT.
IN THE MEANTIME, I HAVE TO FOCUS MY ENERGIES ON MY LATEST CONTRIBUTION TO MANKIND--GETTING THE AIR CONDITIONING WORKING IN THIS PLACE.
NOT A MAJOR CRISIS FOR THE NONCORPOREAL SET LIKE MYSELF, BUT WE ARE IN THE DESERT AND APPARENTLY TIGRA IS SHEDDING ALL OVER EVERYTHING.

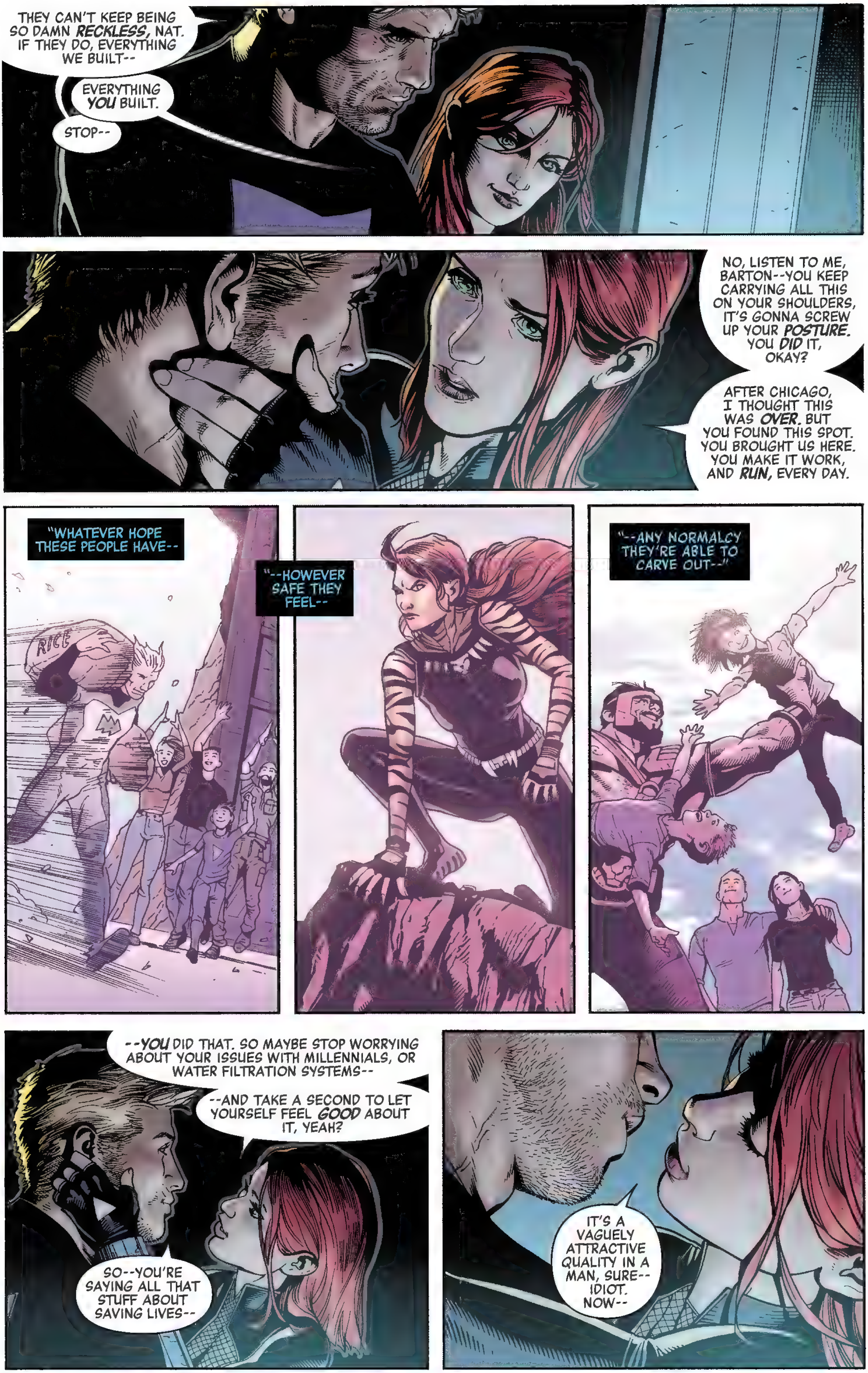

DID YOU NOT HEAR ME? I SAID THIS COULD FIX CAPTAIN AMERICA! ISN'T HE SUPPOSED TO BE YOUR BEST FRIEND OR SOMETHING?
IT WAS ACTUALLY A PRETTY COMPLICATED RELATIONSHIP--
COME ON--
OKAY, YEAH, HE WAS--

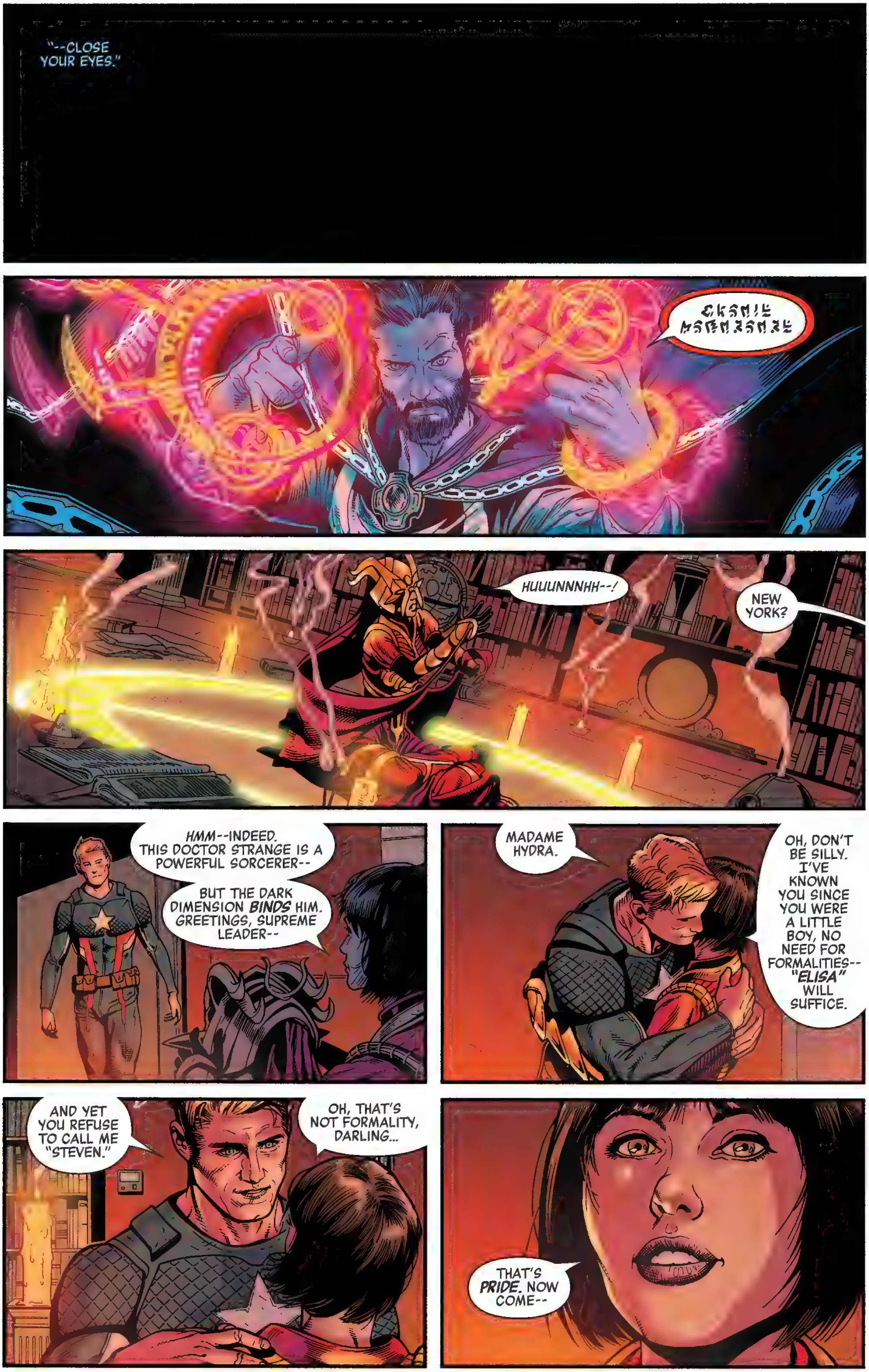

--AND THEN HE PLAYED US.
BUT IF THERE'S A CHANCE--
OH, A CHANCE, RIGHT--I REMEMBER THOSE! LIKE WHEN THERE WAS A CHANCE HE WAS A CLONE, SO WE ATTACKED A GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY TO EXPOSE HIM.

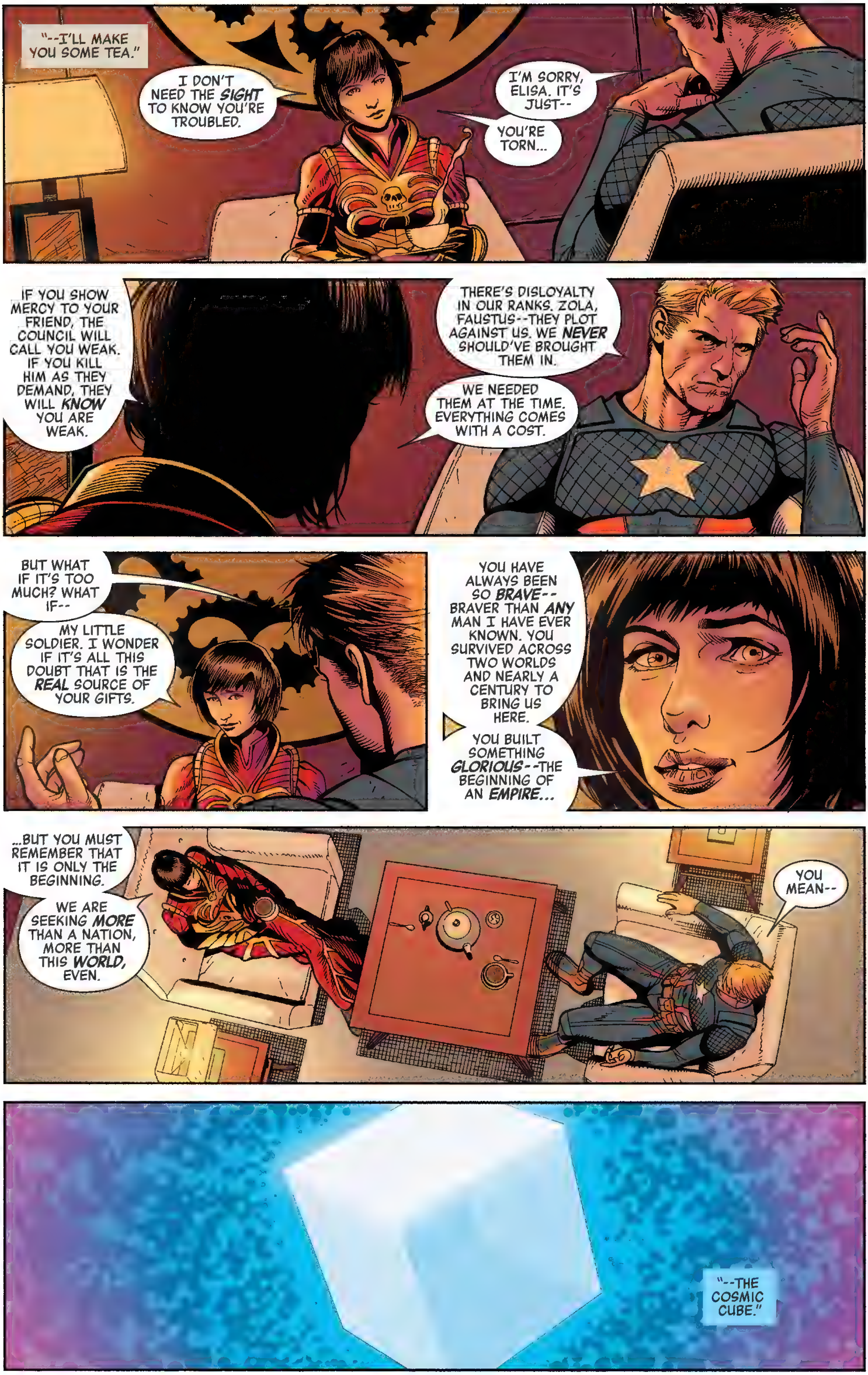

"THERE WERE 89 CASUALTIES THAT DAY. HE'S NOT A CLONE, BY THE WAY.

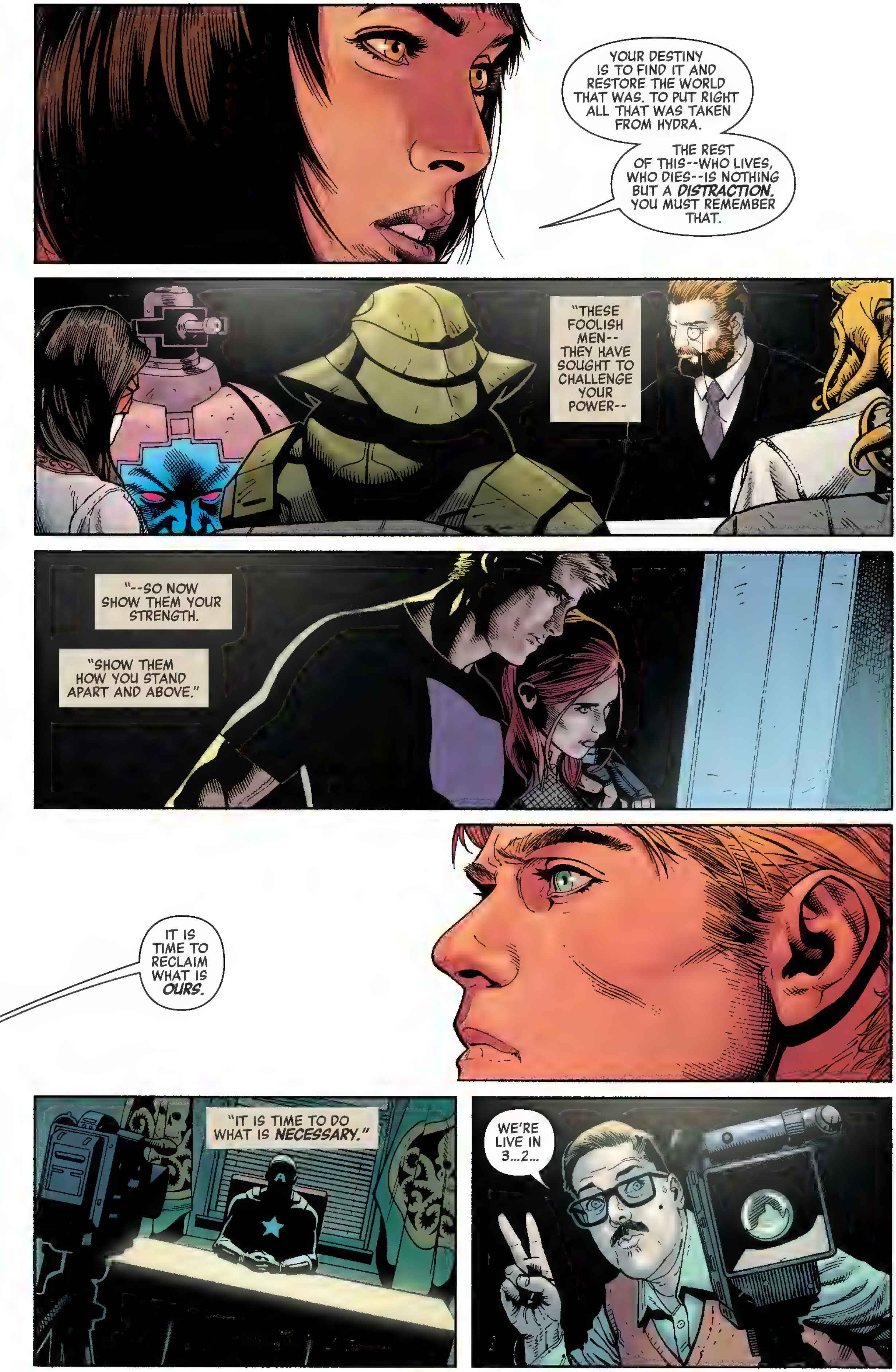

"OR THERE WAS THE CHANCE HE WAS MIND-CONTROLLED, SO WE RAIDED DOCTOR FAUSTUS' INSTITUTE TO TRY TO FREE HIM. ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTEEN CASUALTIES. GOT THAT ONE WRONG, TOO."

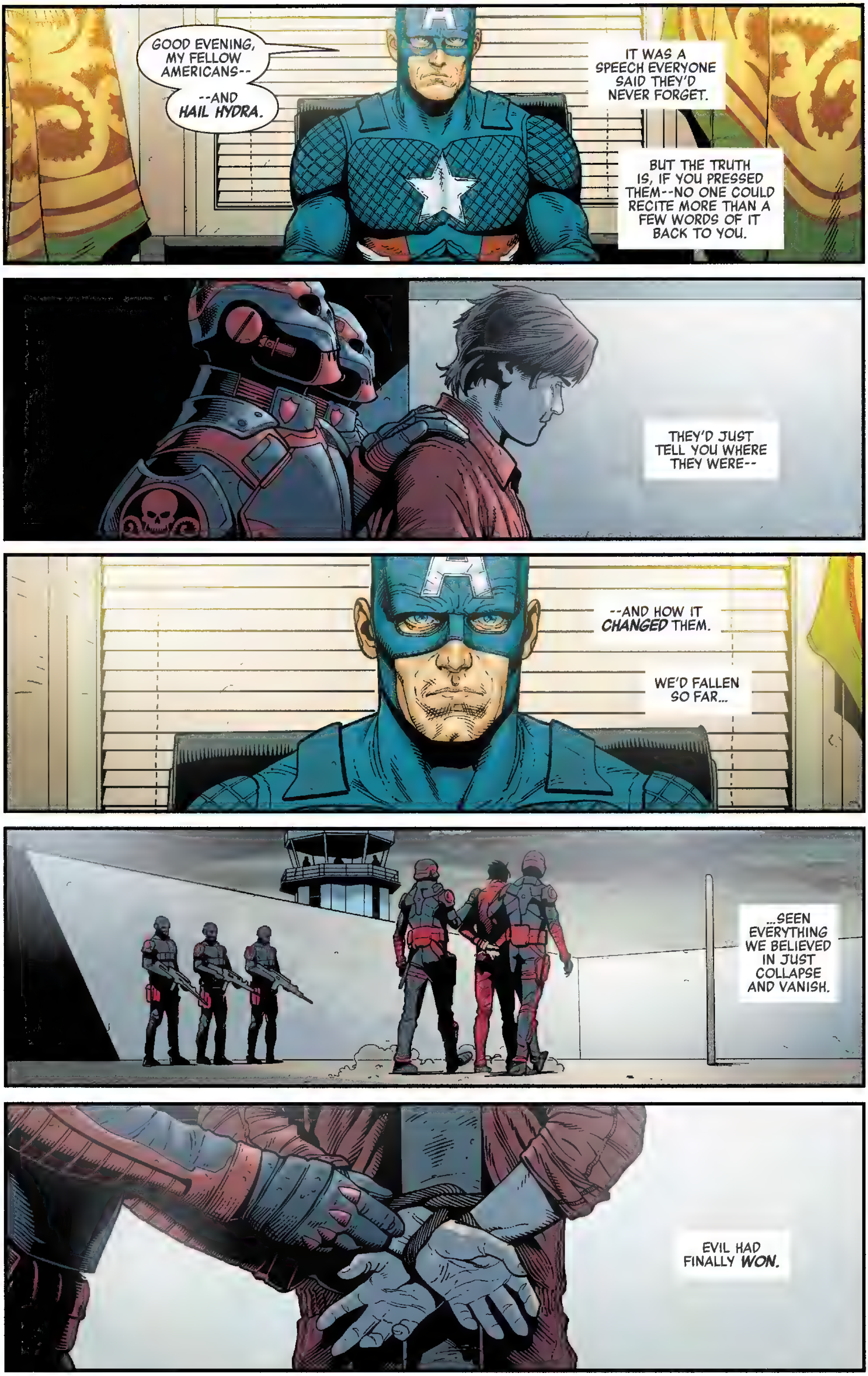

BUT RICK JONES--
HAS BEEN SITTING IN A PRISON CELL SINCE BEFORE THE ATTACK EVEN STARTED.
YOU WERE CATFISHED, PAL. IT HAPPENS TO THE BEST OF US. I COULD TELL YOU SOME STORIES-- WAIT, HOW OLD ARE YOU? POINT IS, I GET THIS STUFF EVERY DAY.
YOU CAN'T JUST GIVE UP-- YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE A SUPER HERO!
LOOK AROUND YOU, KID--
--DOES THIS PLACE LOOK LIKE WE'RE ABOUT TO GO SAVE THE WORLD? AVENGERS MANSION HAD CONSIDERABLY LESS EXPOSED PLUMBING.
WE'RE NOT "SUPER HEROES" ANYMORE. WE'RE JUST FUGITIVES. JUST--
--PEOPLE WHO REMEMBER A LITTLE TOO WELL.
ANYHOW, NOWADAYS, THE MISSION IS SAVE EACH OTHER. SAVE YOURSELF. SURVIVE. LESS AMBITIOUS, BUT SOMEHOW STILL NOT ENTIRELY SUCCESSFUL, SURPRISINGLY ENOUGH.
AND BESIDES, THIS IS MY LAB, WHICH MEANS MY RULES. IF YOU DON'T LIKE IT--
DO NOT OPEN!
TONY
"--TALK TO MY LANDLORD."
YOU THINK WE WERE TOO HARD ON THEM, CLINT? I MEAN, WHEN I WAS THEIR AGE I WAS A PROGRAMMED ASSASSIN.
I WAS IN THE CIRCUS.
WHO CAN SAY WHICH IS WORSE?

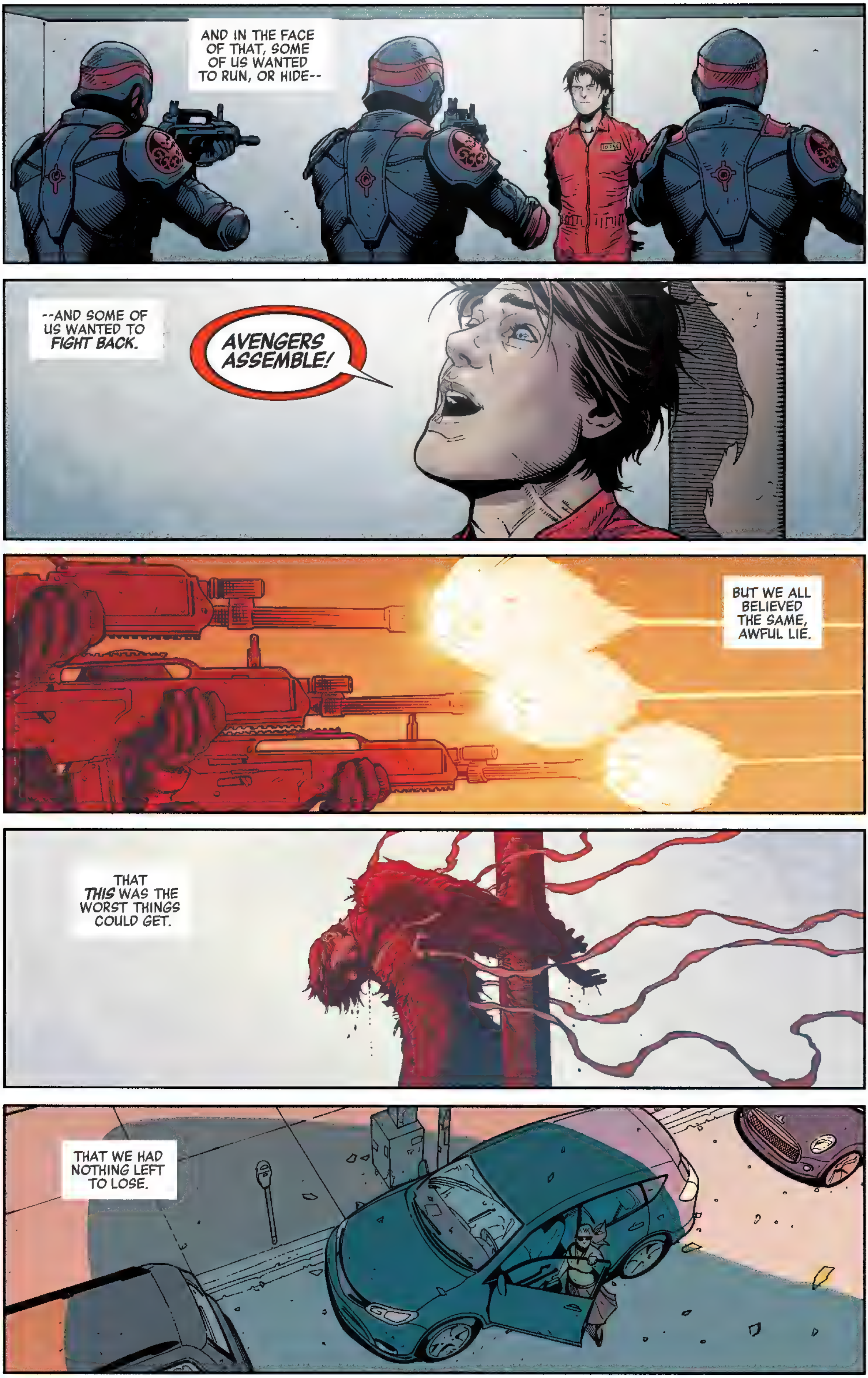

THEY CAN'T KEEP BEING SO DAMN *RECKLESS*, NAT. IF THEY DO, EVERYTHING WE BUILT--
EVERYTHING *YOU* BUILT.
STOP--
NO, LISTEN TO ME, BARTON--YOU KEEP CARRYING ALL THIS ON YOUR SHOULDERS, IT'S GONNA SCREW UP YOUR *POSTURE*. YOU *DID* IT, OKAY?
AFTER CHICAGO, I THOUGHT THIS WAS *OVER*. BUT YOU FOUND THIS SPOT. YOU BROUGHT US HERE. YOU MAKE IT WORK, AND *RUN*, EVERY DAY.
"WHATEVER HOPE THESE PEOPLE HAVE--
RICE
"--HOWEVER SAFE THEY FEEL--
"--ANY NORMALCY THEY'RE ABLE TO CARVE OUT--"
--*YOU* DID THAT. SO MAYBE STOP WORRYING ABOUT YOUR ISSUES WITH MILLENNIALS, OR WATER FILTRATION SYSTEMS--
--AND TAKE A SECOND TO LET YOURSELF FEEL *GOOD* ABOUT IT, YEAH?
SO--YOU'RE SAYING ALL THAT STUFF ABOUT SAVING LIVES--
IT'S A VAGUELY ATTRACTIVE QUALITY IN A MAN, SURE--IDIOT. NOW--

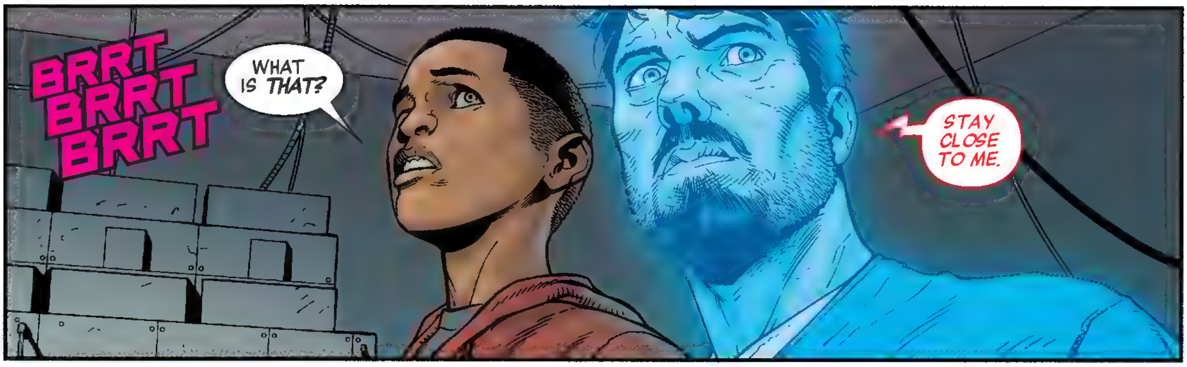

"--CLOSE YOUR EYES."
HUUUNNNHH--!
NEW YORK?
HMM--INDEED. THIS DOCTOR STRANGE IS A POWERFUL SORCERER--
BUT THE DARK DIMENSION *BINDS* HIM. GREETINGS, SUPREME LEADER--
MADAME HYDRA.
OH, DON'T BE SILLY. I'VE KNOWN YOU SINCE YOU WERE A LITTLE BOY, NO NEED FOR FORMALITIES-- *"ELISA"* WILL SUFFICE.
AND YET YOU REFUSE TO CALL ME "STEVEN."
OH, THAT'S NOT FORMALITY, DARLING...
THAT'S *PRIDE.* NOW COME--

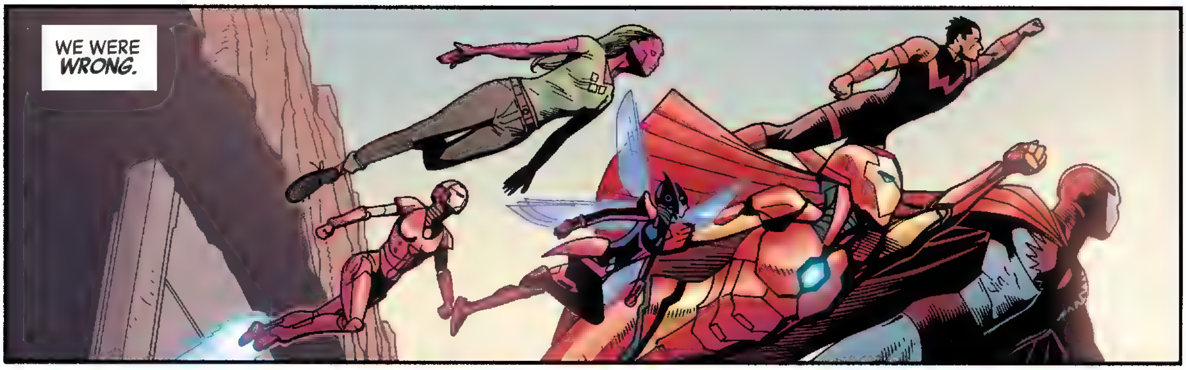

"--I'LL MAKE YOU SOME TEA."
I DON'T NEED THE *SIGHT* TO KNOW YOU'RE TROUBLED.
I'M SORRY, ELISA. IT'S JUST--
YOU'RE TORN...
IF YOU SHOW MERCY TO YOUR FRIEND, THE COUNCIL WILL CALL YOU WEAK. IF YOU KILL HIM AS THEY DEMAND, THEY WILL *KNOW* YOU ARE WEAK.
THERE'S DISLOYALTY IN OUR RANKS. ZOLA, FAUSTUS--THEY PLOT AGAINST US. WE *NEVER* SHOULD'VE BROUGHT THEM IN.
WE NEEDED THEM AT THE TIME. EVERYTHING COMES WITH A COST.
BUT WHAT IF IT'S TOO MUCH? WHAT IF--
MY LITTLE SOLDIER. I WONDER IF IT'S ALL THIS DOUBT THAT IS THE *REAL* SOURCE OF YOUR GIFTS.
YOU HAVE ALWAYS BEEN SO *BRAVE*--BRAVER THAN *ANY* MAN I HAVE EVER KNOWN. YOU SURVIVED ACROSS TWO WORLDS AND NEARLY A CENTURY TO BRING US HERE.
YOU BUILT SOMETHING *GLORIOUS*--THE BEGINNING OF AN *EMPIRE*...
...BUT YOU MUST REMEMBER THAT IT IS ONLY THE BEGINNING.
WE ARE SEEKING *MORE* THAN A NATION, MORE THAN THIS *WORLD*, EVEN.
YOU MEAN--
"--THE COSMIC CUBE."

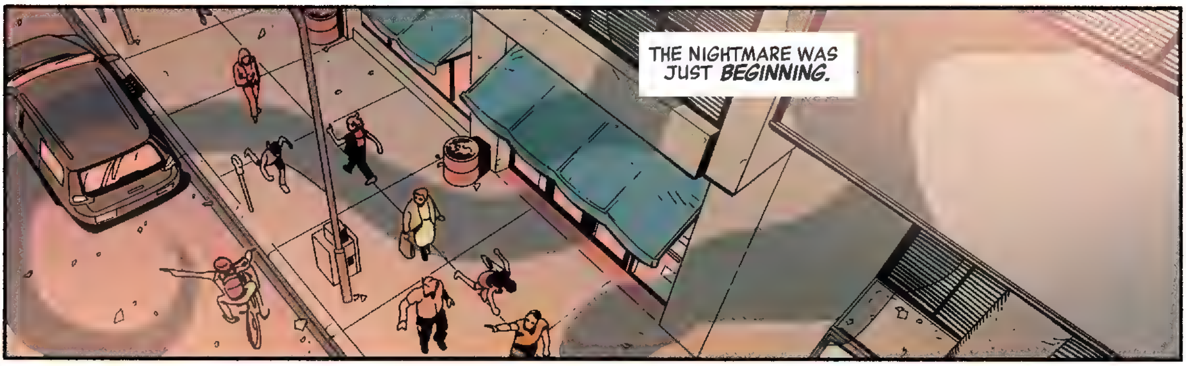

YOUR DESTINY IS TO FIND IT AND RESTORE THE WORLD THAT WAS. TO PUT RIGHT ALL THAT WAS TAKEN FROM HYDRA.
THE REST OF THIS--WHO LIVES, WHO DIES--IS NOTHING BUT A *DISTRACTION.* YOU MUST REMEMBER THAT.
"THESE FOOLISH MEN--THEY HAVE SOUGHT TO CHALLENGE YOUR POWER--
"--SO NOW SHOW THEM YOUR STRENGTH.
"SHOW THEM HOW YOU STAND APART AND ABOVE."
IT IS TIME TO RECLAIM WHAT IS *OURS.*
"IT IS TIME TO DO WHAT IS *NECESSARY.*"
WE'RE LIVE IN 3...2...

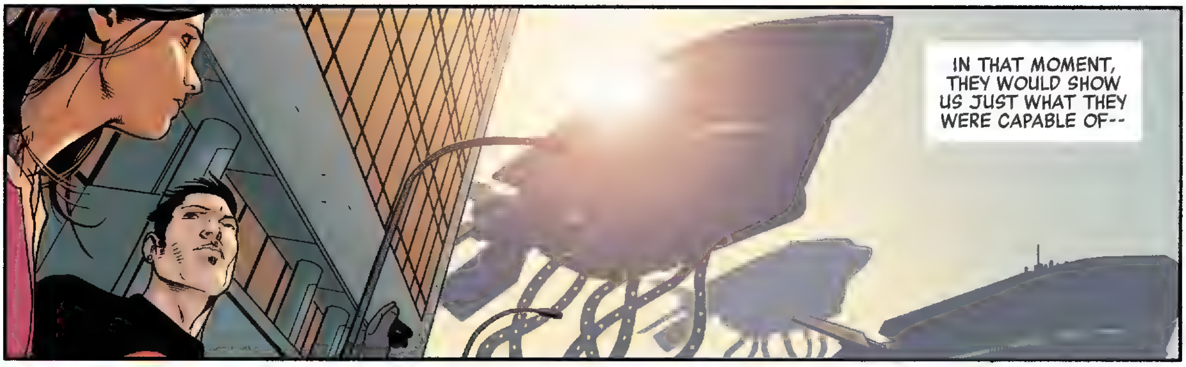

GOOD EVENING, MY FELLOW AMERICANS--
--AND HAIL HYDRA.
IT WAS A SPEECH EVERYONE SAID THEY'D NEVER FORGET.
BUT THE TRUTH IS, IF YOU PRESSED THEM--NO ONE COULD RECITE MORE THAN A FEW WORDS OF IT BACK TO YOU.
THEY'D JUST TELL YOU WHERE THEY WERE--
--AND HOW IT CHANGED THEM.
WE'D FALLEN SO FAR...
...SEEN EVERYTHING WE BELIEVED IN JUST COLLAPSE AND VANISH.
EVIL HAD FINALLY WON.

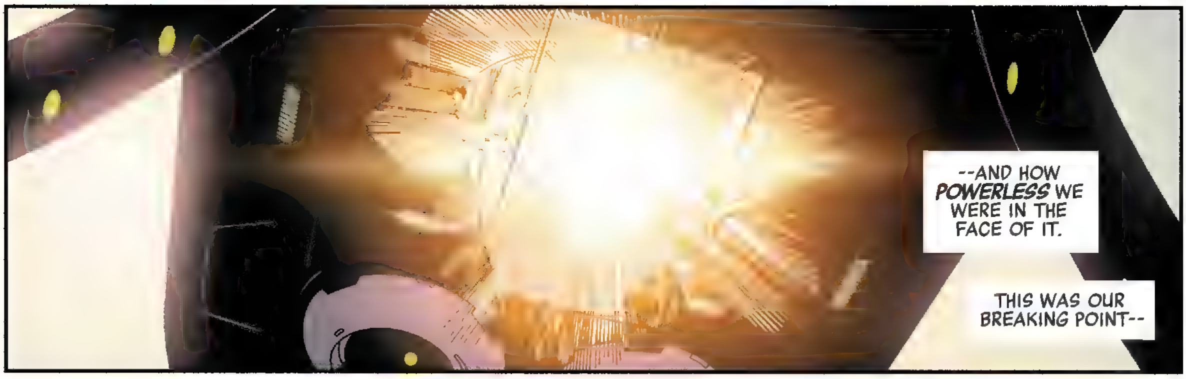

AND IN THE FACE OF THAT, SOME OF US WANTED TO RUN, OR HIDE--
--AND SOME OF US WANTED TO *FIGHT BACK.*
*AVENGERS ASSEMBLE!*
BUT WE ALL BELIEVED THE SAME, AWFUL LIE.
THAT *THIS* WAS THE WORST THINGS COULD GET.
THAT WE HAD NOTHING LEFT TO LOSE.

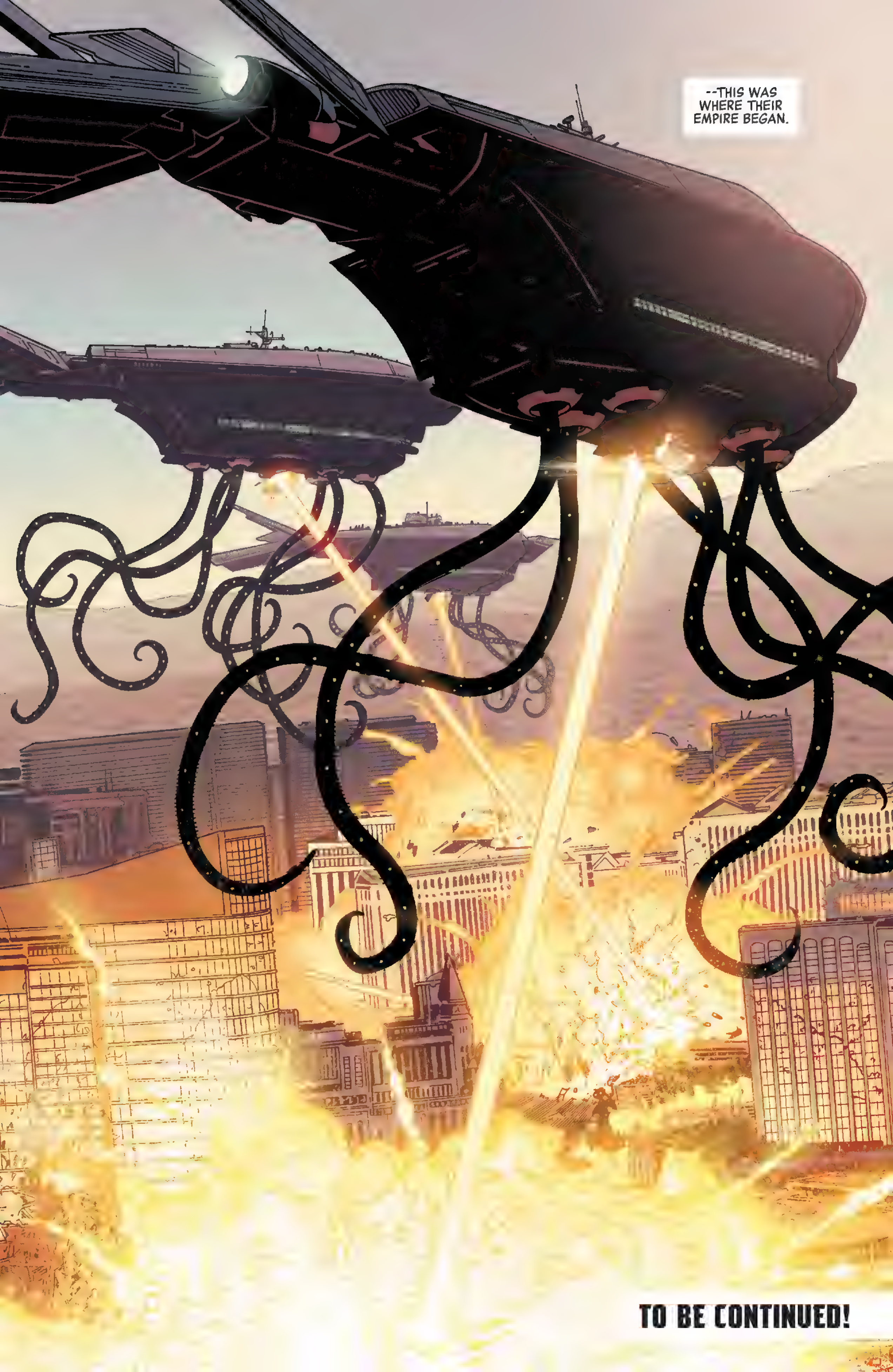

BRRT BRRT BRRT
WHAT IS *THAT?*
STAY CLOSE TO ME.


WE WERE *WRONG.*


THE NIGHTMARE WAS JUST *BEGINNING.*


IN THAT MOMENT, THEY WOULD SHOW US JUST WHAT THEY WERE CAPABLE OF--


--AND HOW *POWERLESS* WE WERE IN THE FACE OF IT.
THIS WAS OUR BREAKING POINT--


--THIS WAS WHERE THEIR EMPIRE BEGAN.
TO BE CONTINUED!

# SECRET EMPIRE

## MAY

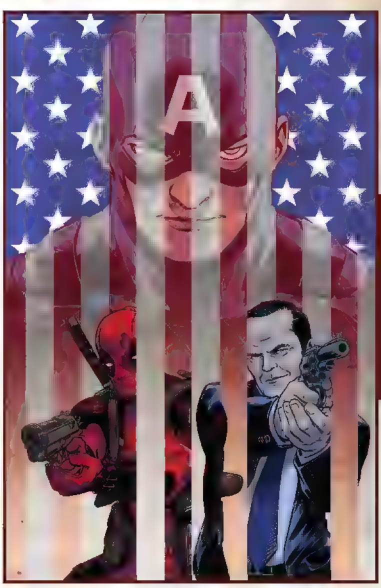
### CAPTAIN AMERICA: STEVE ROGERS #17

IN CAP WE TRUST!

### CAPTAIN AMERICA: SAM WILSON #22

SAM WILSON FLIES AGAIN!

### DEADPOOL #31



STEVE ROGERS' RED RIGHT HAND HAS A JOB TO DO...

## BEYOND THE SHIELD

### ULTIMATES$^2$ #7

WILL GALACTUS HELP THE STRANDED HEROES?

### THE MIGHTY CAPTAIN MARVEL #5

OUTNUMBERED & OUTGUNNED, CAPTAIN MARVEL FIGHTS TO KEEP HOPE ALIVE!

# SECRET EMPIRE

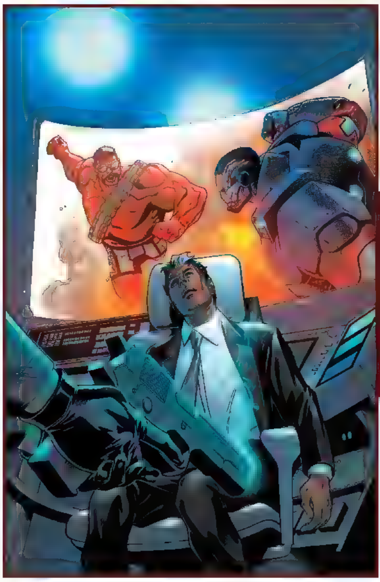
## MAY

### SECRET WARRIORS #1

### SECRET WARRIORS #2

QUAKE ASSEMBLES THE NEXT GENERATION OF INHUMANS TO TAKE ON STEVE ROGERS!

### U.S.AVENGERS #6



CAP WANTS S.H.I.E.L.D.--AND ROBERTO DA COSTA IS IN HIS WAY.

## DARKFORCE NEW YORK

### DOCTOR STRANGE #21

CAN THE SORCERER SUPREME PROTECT A CITY BESIEGED BY DARK FORCES?

# SECRET EMPIRE
# NEXT

SECRET EMPIRE
#2

THE DEFENDERS STRUGGLE TO SURVIVE IN A DARKFORCE-ENSHROUDED MANHATTAN…

## SECRET EMPIRE #3

SECRET EMPIRE
#3

UNDER CONSTANT ATTACK FROM WAVE AFTER WAVE OF INVADING CHITAURI ALIENS, CAPTAIN MARVEL AND THE DEEP-SPACE TASK FORCE UNDER HER COMMAND ARE WAGING A WAR OF ATTRITION--ONE THEY MAY NOT BE ABLE TO SURVIVE!

## SECRET EMPIRE: UPRISING #1

BLACK WIDOW LEADS THE NEXT GENERATION OF HEROES ON A MISSION THAT WILL CHALLENGE EVERYTHING THEY BELIEVE IN. WELCOME TO THE NEW RED ROOM.

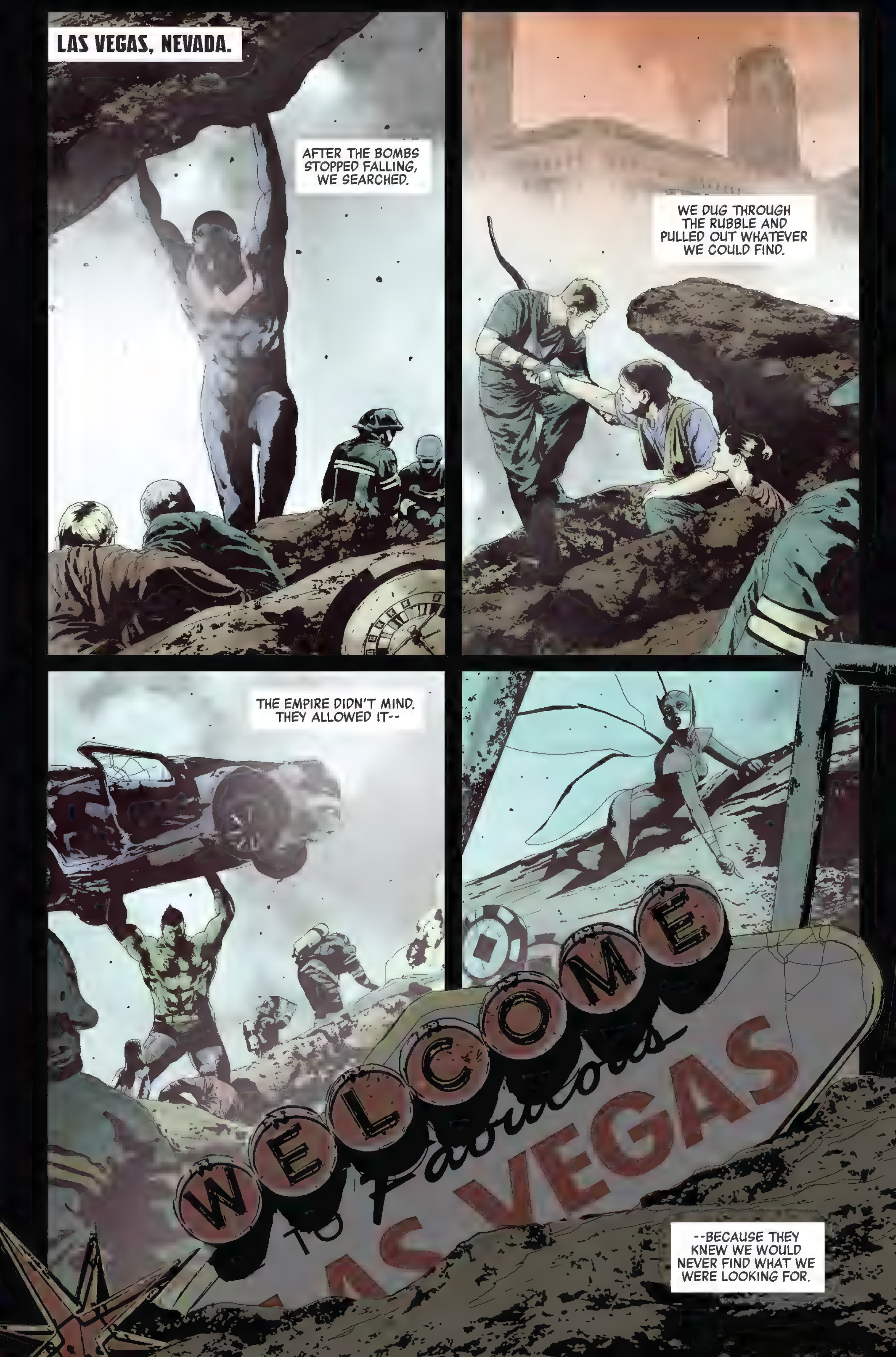
# SECRET EMPIRE

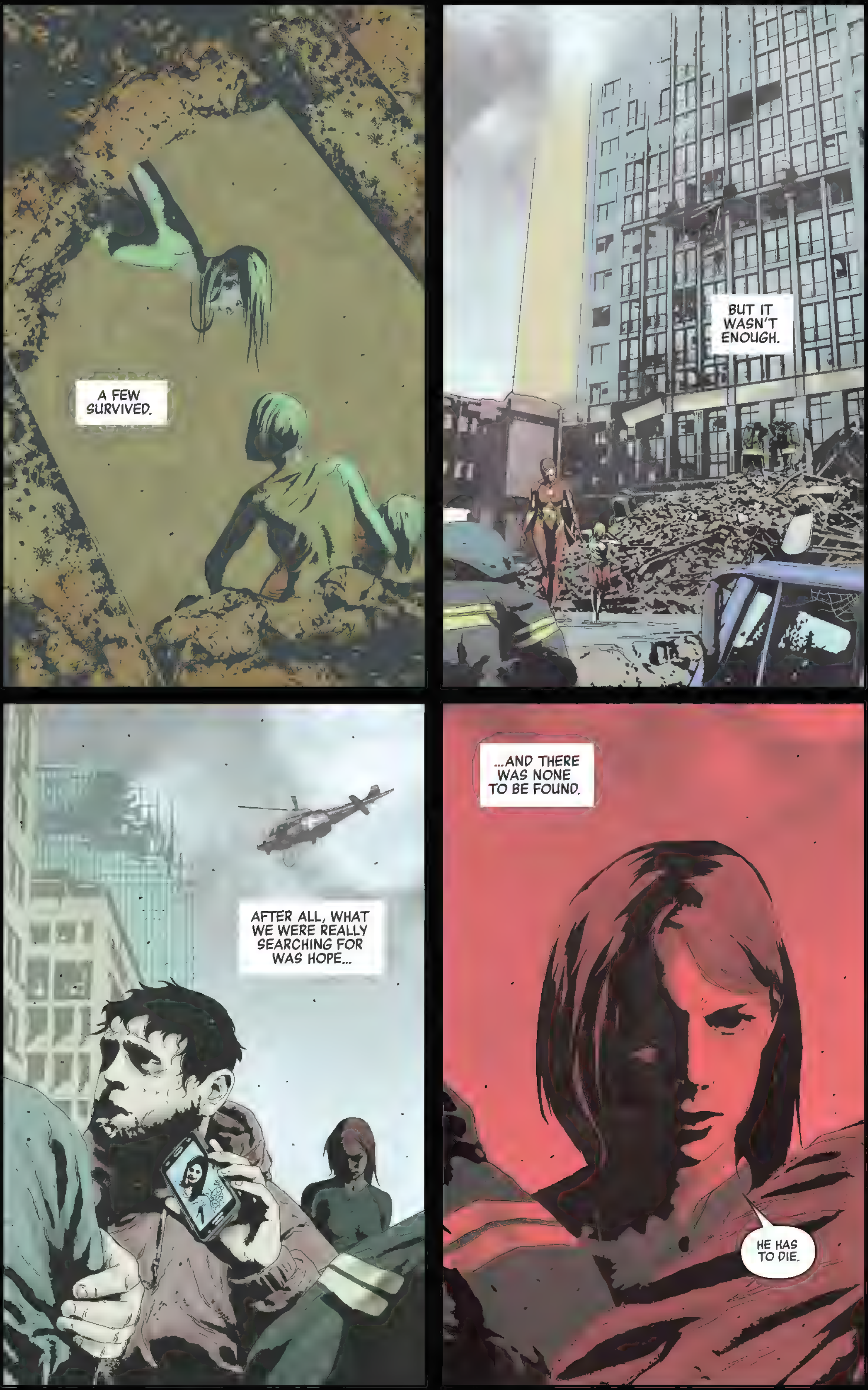
MARVEL

#2

NICK SPENCER • ANDREA SORRENTINO • ROD REIS

# SECRET EMPIRE


LAS VEGAS, NEVADA.
AFTER THE BOMBS STOPPED FALLING, WE SEARCHED.
WE DUG THROUGH THE RUBBLE AND PULLED OUT WHATEVER WE COULD FIND.
THE EMPIRE DIDN'T MIND. THEY ALLOWED IT--
WELCOME
TO Fabulous
VEGAS
--BECAUSE THEY KNEW WE WOULD NEVER FIND WHAT WE WERE LOOKING FOR.


A FEW SURVIVED.
BUT IT WASN'T ENOUGH.
AFTER ALL, WHAT WE WERE REALLY SEARCHING FOR WAS HOPE...
...AND THERE WAS NONE TO BE FOUND.
HE HAS TO DIE.

# SECRET EMPIRE

A Cosmic Cube transformed Steve Rogers, Captain America, into the ultimate Hydra sleeper agent--and after months of scheming and manipulation, the country is now under Hydra's control. Inhumans are closely monitored, and mutants have been relocated to a homeland in New Tian. Earth's most powerful heroes are stranded beyond Earth's Planetary Defense Shield, at the mercy of a Chitauri Invasion--or trapped inside the Darkforce bubble that envelops New York City.

The handful of heroes that remain are trying to oppose Captain America's regime from a hidden base just outside Las Vegas. But after they rescued a young man carrying crucial intel stolen by Rick Jones, Captain America retaliated, sending Hydra warships to annihilate the city...
and ordering Rick's execution.

**Writer** ▪ Nick Spencer
**Artists** ▪ Andrea Sorrentino with Rod Reis
**Letterer** ▪ VC's Travis Lanham
**Recap page Art** ▪ Andrea Sorrentino
**Cover** ▪ Mark Brooks
**Variant Covers** ▪ John Tyler Christopher; Dan Mora & Edgar Delgado; Andrea Sorrentino

**Production Design** ▪ Carlos Lao
**Assistant Editor** ▪ Alanna Smith
**Editor** ▪ Tom Brevoort
**Editor in Chief** ▪ Axel Alonso
**Chief Creative Officer** ▪ Joe Quesada
**President** ▪ Dan Buckley
**Executive Producer** ▪ Alan Fine

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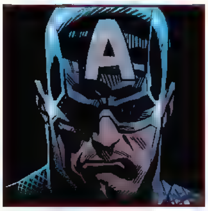
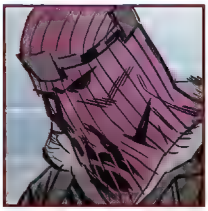
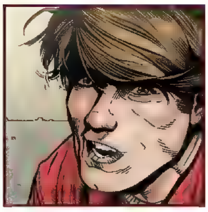
## Hydra Command


Captain America

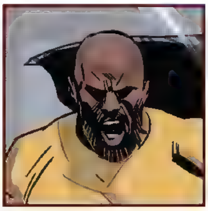

Baron Zemo

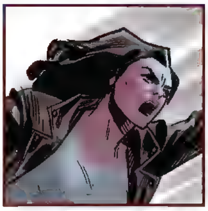
## Deceased

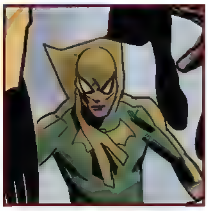

Rick Jones

## Darkforce New York

Defenders


Luke Cage


Jessica Jones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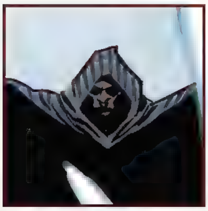
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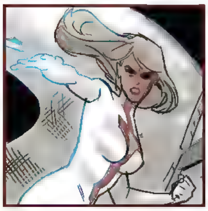
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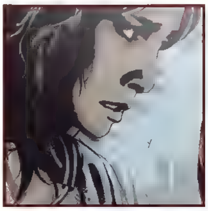
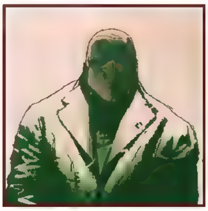
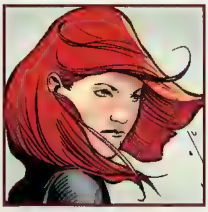

Claire Temple


Kingpin

## The Underground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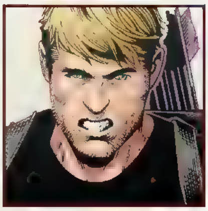
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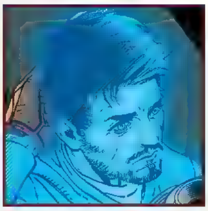
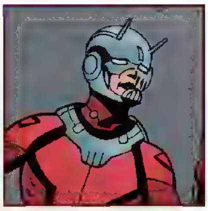
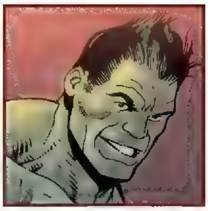
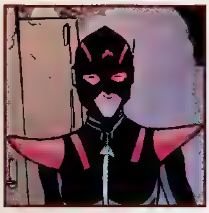
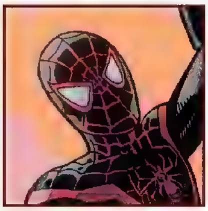

Tony Stark (A.I.)


Ant-Man


Hulk (Amadeus Cho)


Wasp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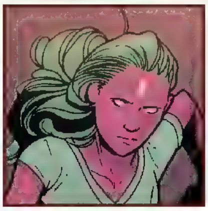
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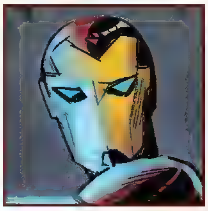
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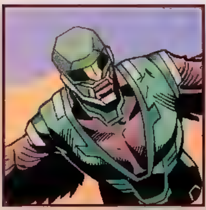
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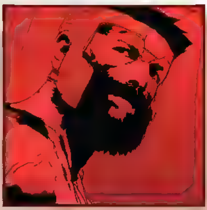
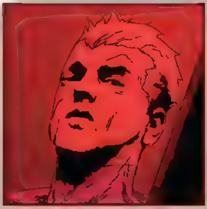

Hercules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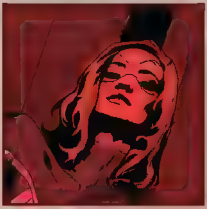
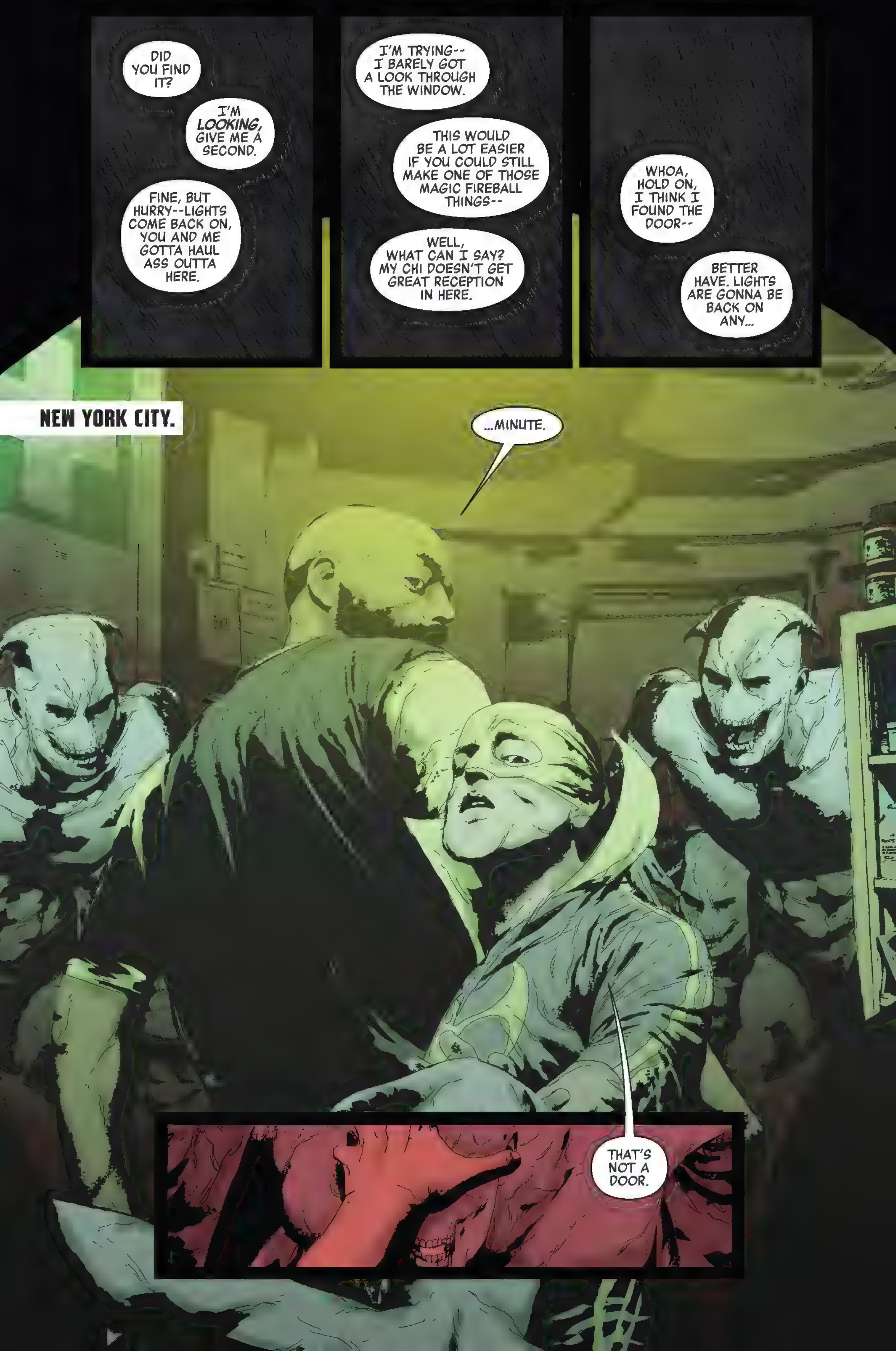
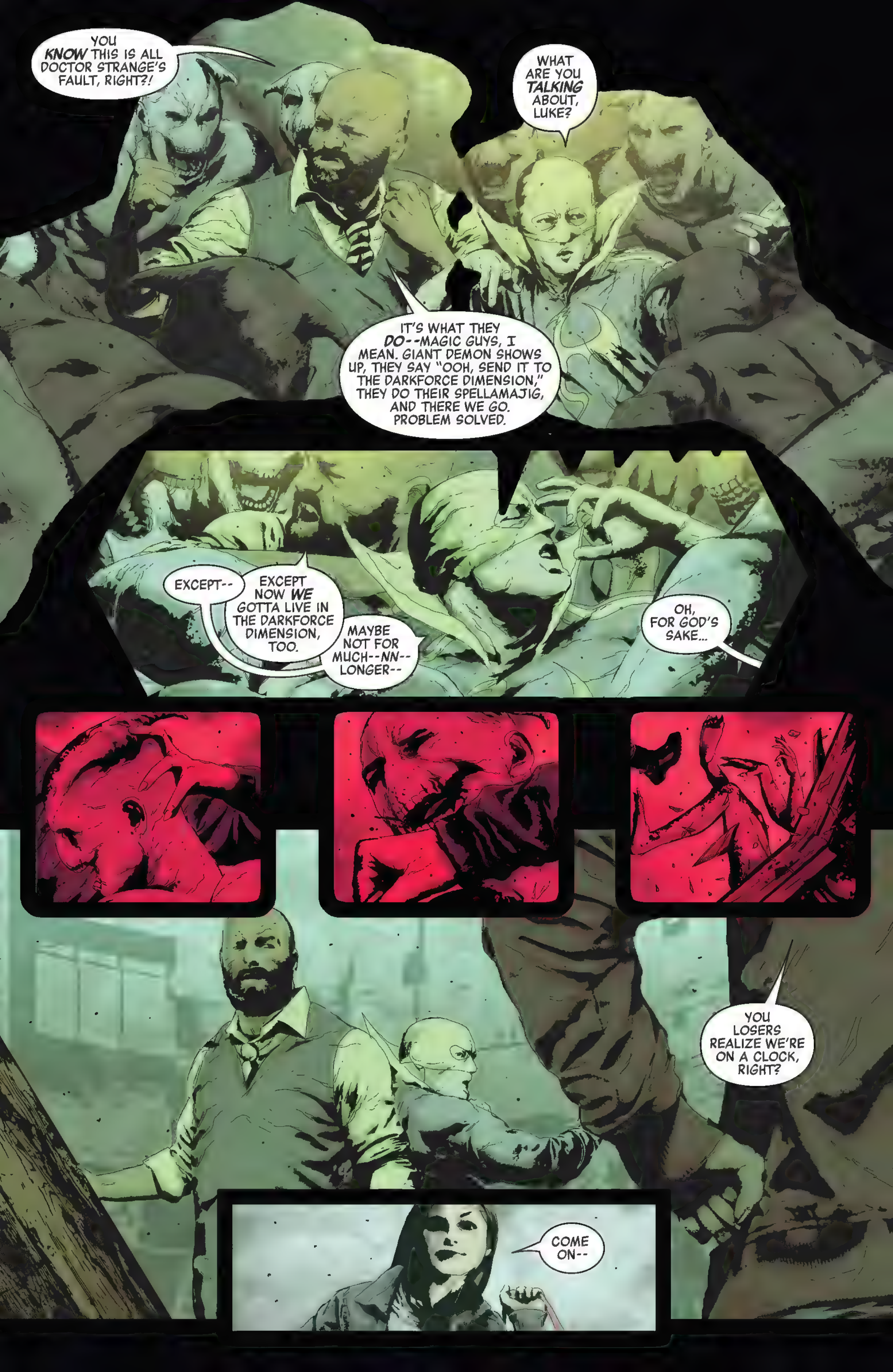
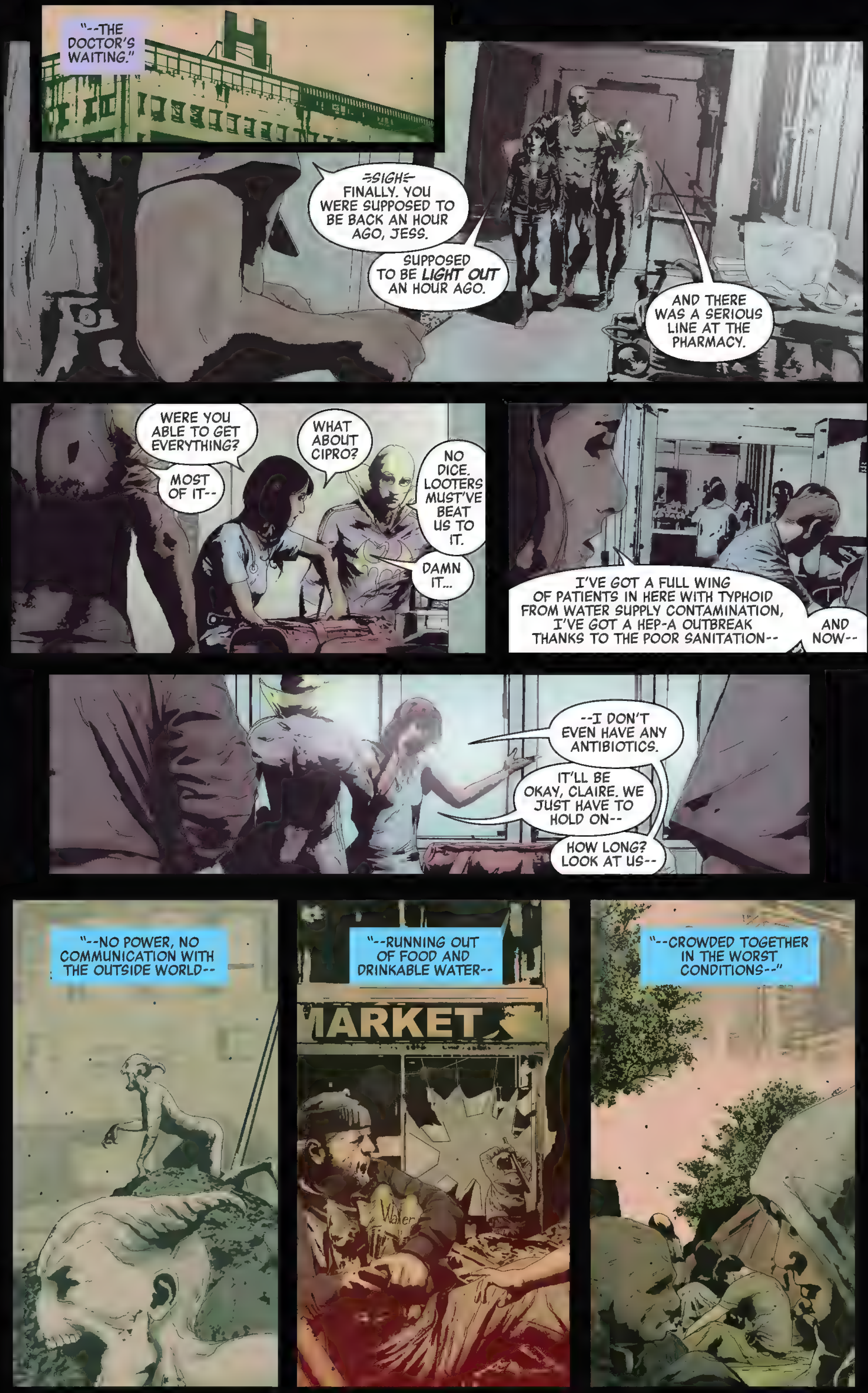
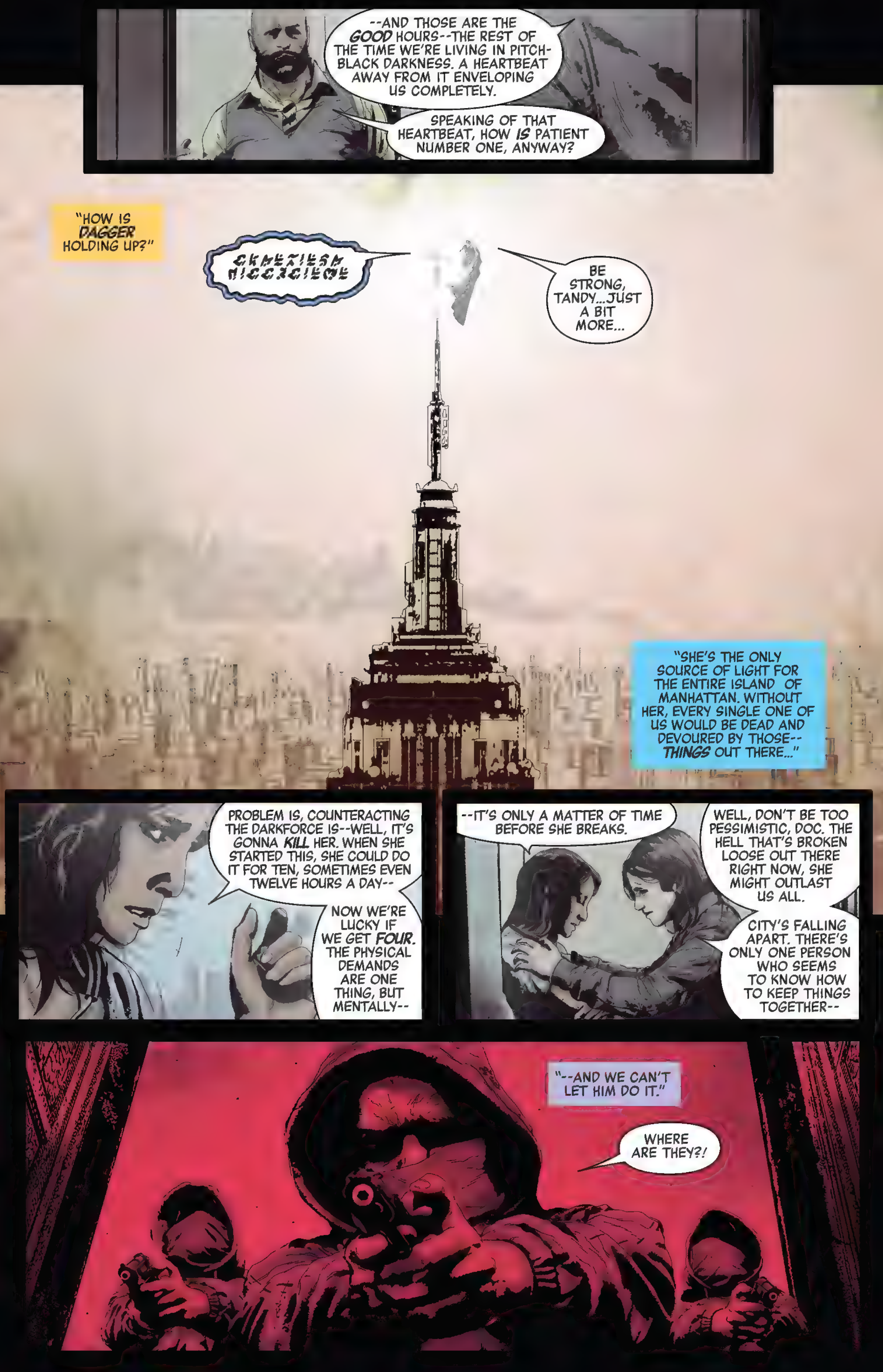
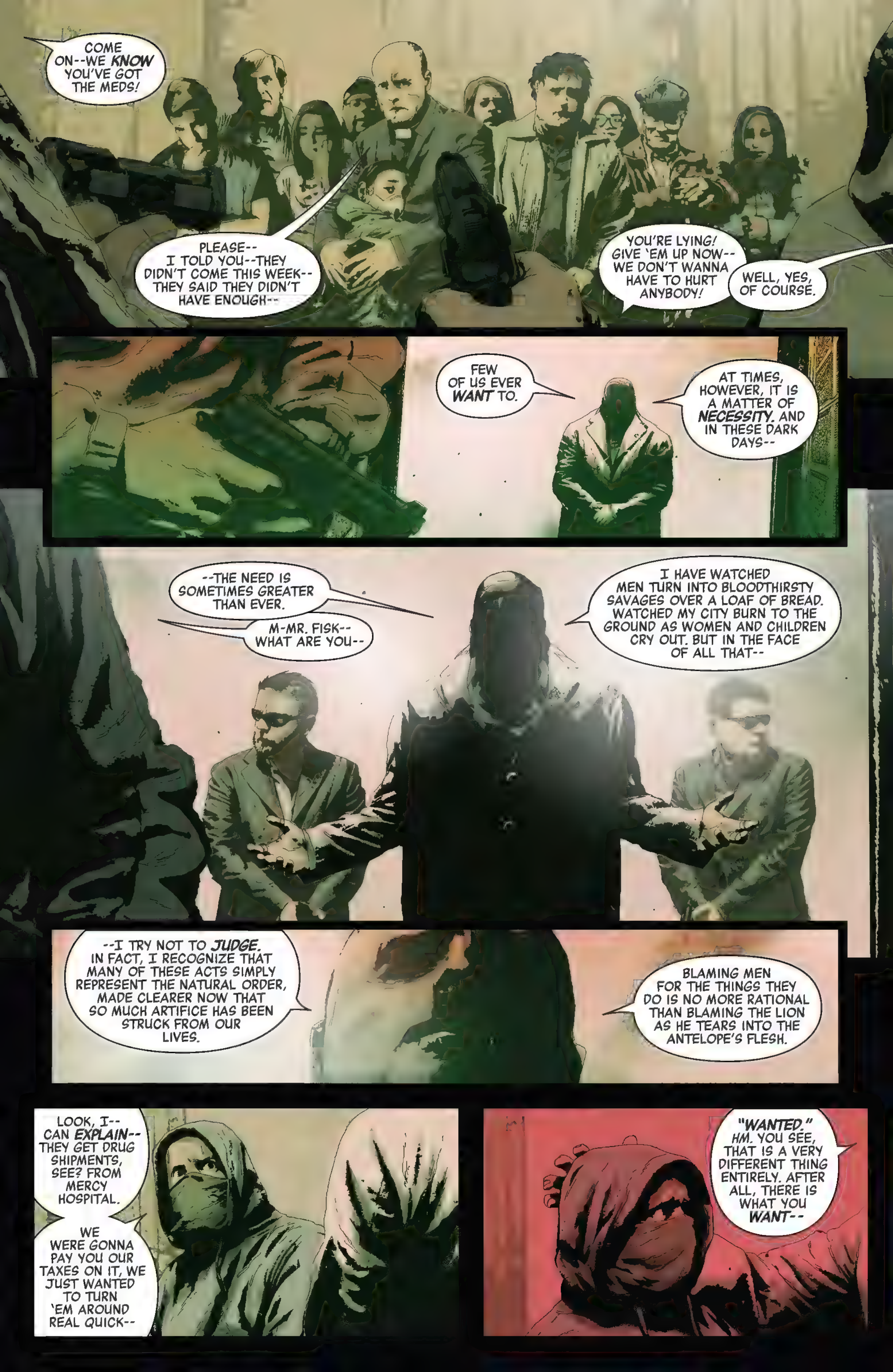

Mockingbird

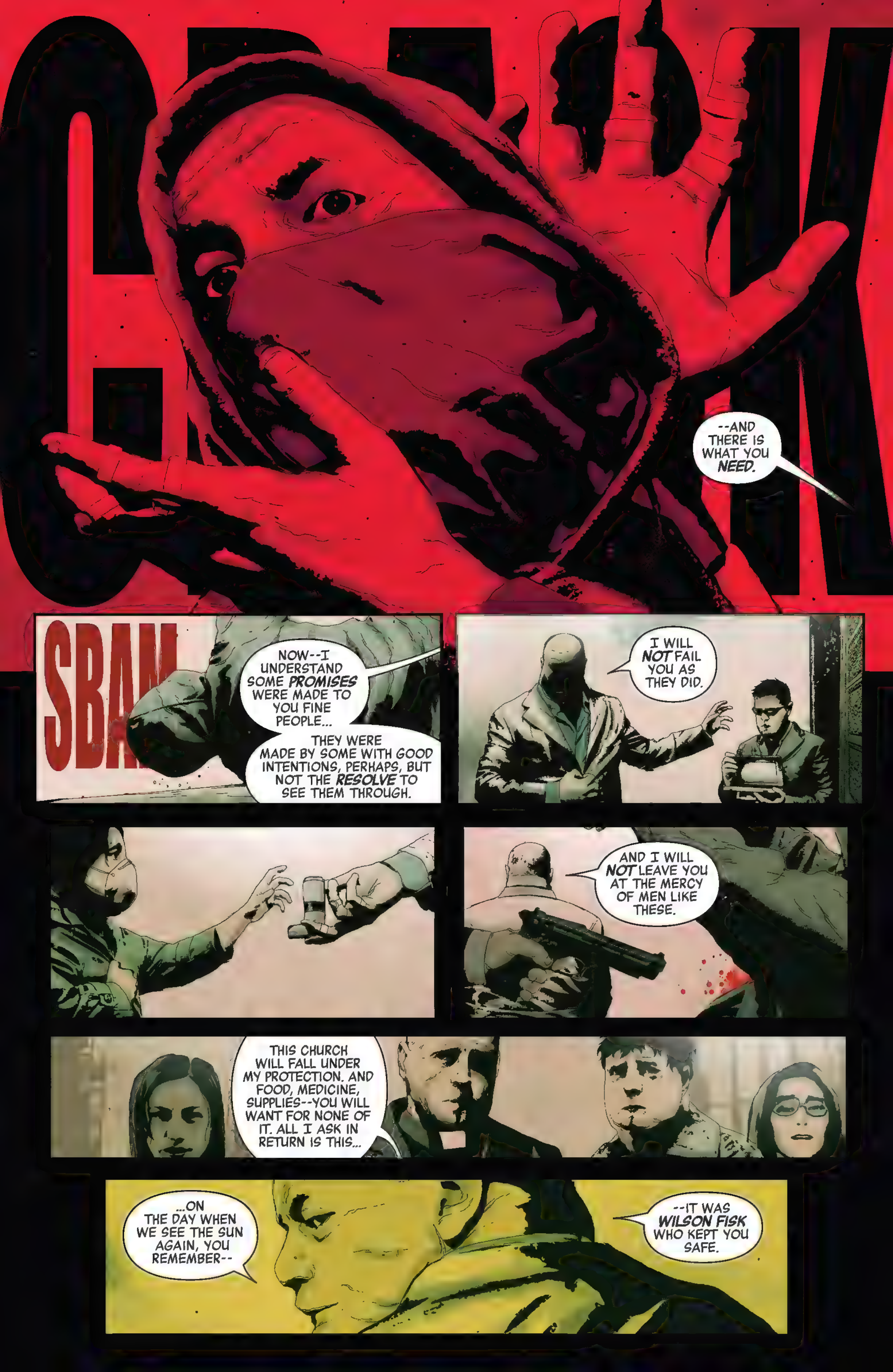

DID YOU FIND IT?
I'M *LOOKING*, GIVE ME A SECOND.
FINE, BUT HURRY--LIGHTS COME BACK ON, YOU AND ME GOTTA HAUL ASS OUTTA HERE.
I'M TRYING-- I BARELY GOT A LOOK THROUGH THE WINDOW.
THIS WOULD BE A LOT EASIER IF YOU COULD STILL MAKE ONE OF THOSE MAGIC FIREBALL THINGS--
WELL, WHAT CAN I SAY? MY CHI DOESN'T GET GREAT RECEPTION IN HERE.
WHOA, HOLD ON, I THINK I FOUND THE DOOR--
BETTER HAVE. LIGHTS ARE GONNA BE BACK ON ANY...
NEW YORK CITY.
...MINUTE.
THAT'S NOT A DOOR.

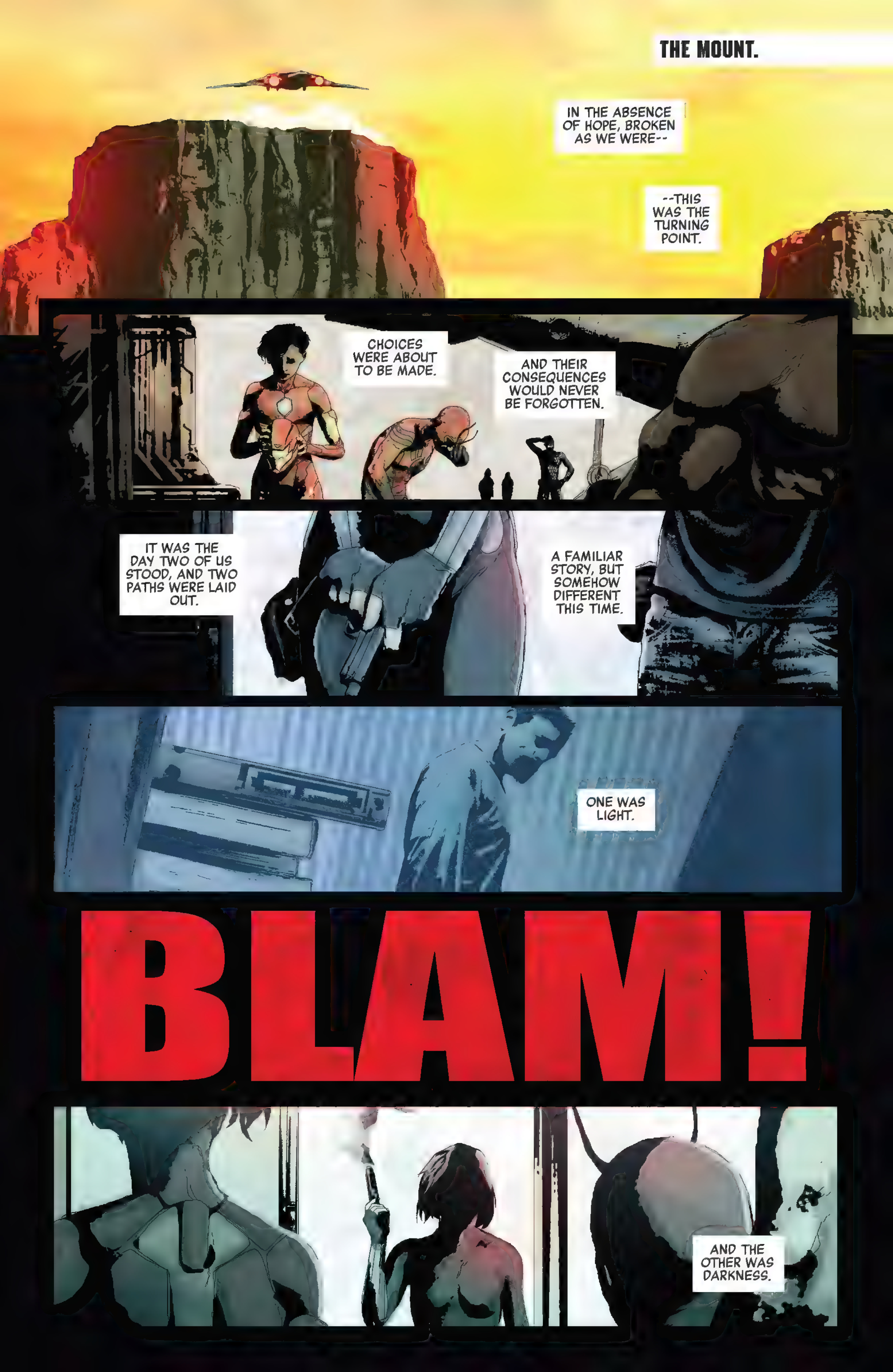

YOU *KNOW* THIS IS ALL DOCTOR STRANGE'S FAULT, RIGHT?!
WHAT ARE YOU *TALKING* ABOUT, LUKE?
IT'S WHAT THEY *DO*--MAGIC GUYS, I MEAN. GIANT DEMON SHOWS UP, THEY SAY "OOH, SEND IT TO THE DARKFORCE DIMENSION," THEY DO THEIR SPELLAMAJIG, AND THERE WE GO. PROBLEM SOLVED.
EXCEPT--
EXCEPT NOW *WE* GOTTA LIVE IN THE DARKFORCE DIMENSION, TOO.
MAYBE NOT FOR MUCH--*NN*--LONGER--
OH, FOR GOD'S SAKE...
YOU LOSERS REALIZE WE'RE ON A CLOCK, RIGHT?
COME ON--

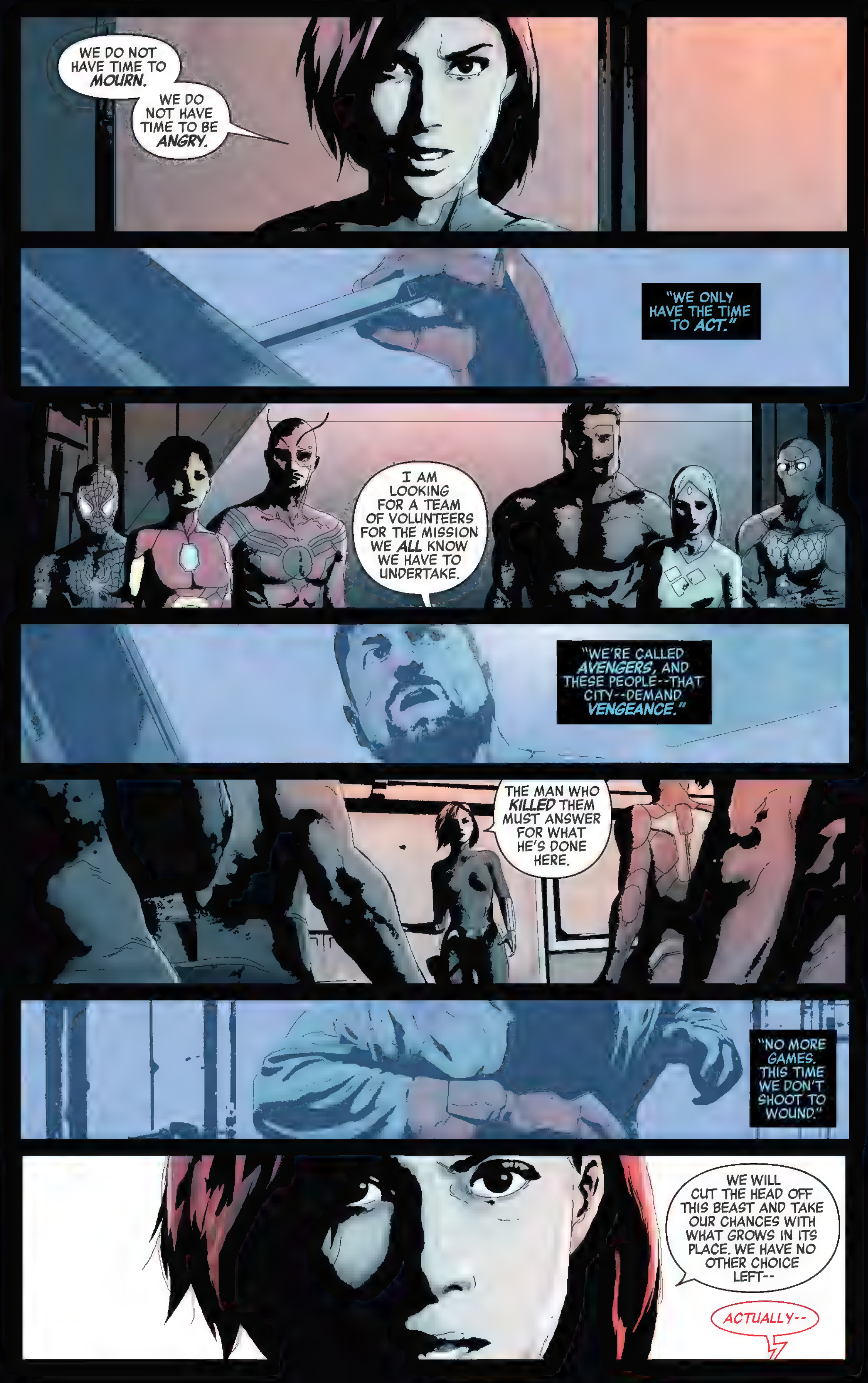

"--THE DOCTOR'S WAITING."
=SIGH= FINALLY. YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO BE BACK AN HOUR AGO, JESS.
SUPPOSED TO BE **LIGHT OUT** AN HOUR AGO.
AND THERE WAS A SERIOUS LINE AT THE PHARMACY.
WERE YOU ABLE TO GET EVERYTHING?
MOST OF IT--
WHAT ABOUT CIPRO?
NO DICE. LOOTERS MUST'VE BEAT US TO IT.
DAMN IT...
I'VE GOT A FULL WING OF PATIENTS IN HERE WITH TYPHOID FROM WATER SUPPLY CONTAMINATION, I'VE GOT A HEP-A OUTBREAK THANKS TO THE POOR SANITATION--
AND NOW--
--I DON'T EVEN HAVE ANY ANTIBIOTICS.
IT'LL BE OKAY, CLAIRE. WE JUST HAVE TO HOLD ON--
HOW LONG? LOOK AT US--
"--NO POWER, NO COMMUNICATION WITH THE OUTSIDE WORLD--
"--RUNNING OUT OF FOOD AND DRINKABLE WATER--
MARKET
Water
"--CROWDED TOGETHER IN THE WORST CONDITIONS--"

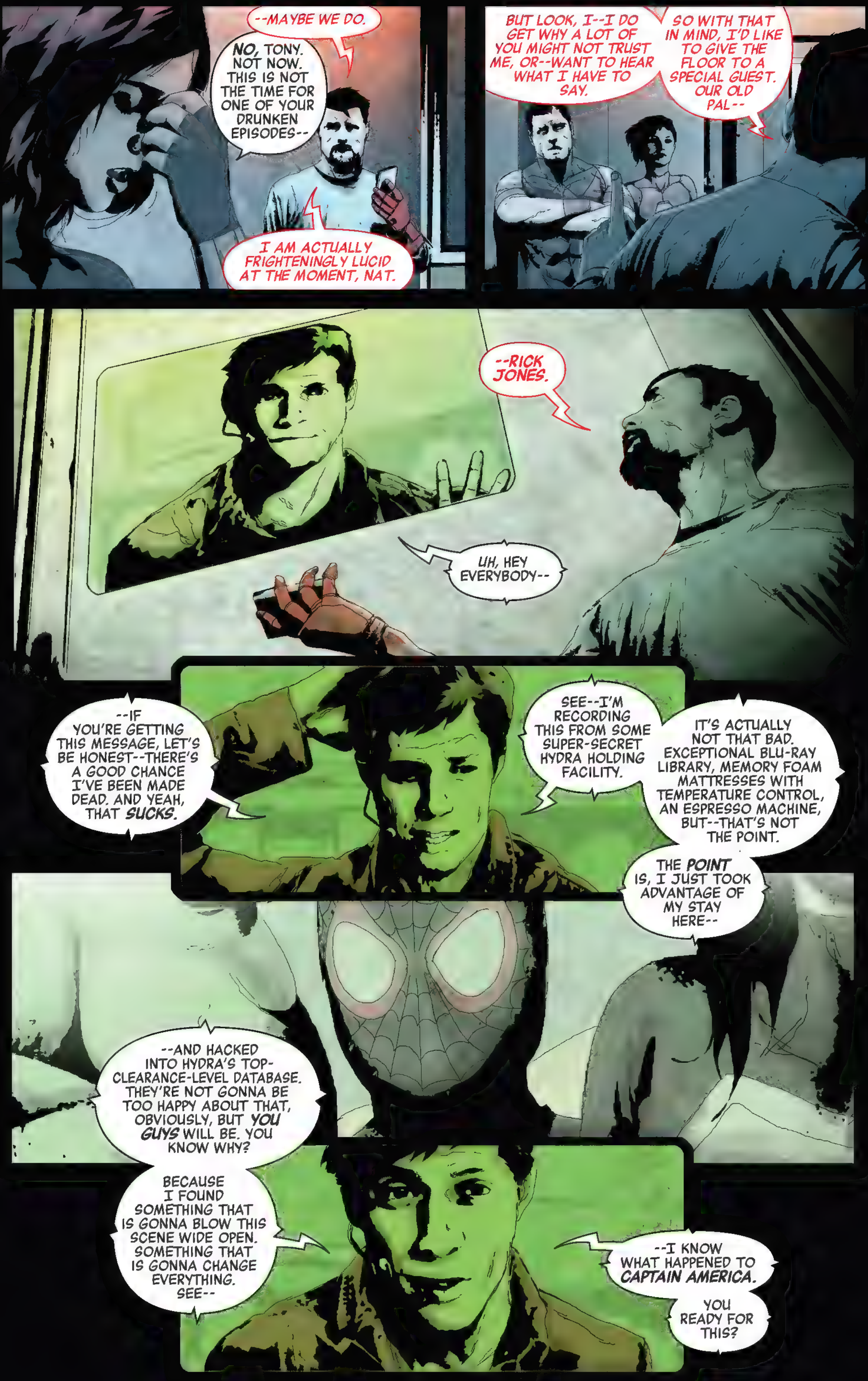

--AND THOSE ARE THE *GOOD* HOURS--THE REST OF THE TIME WE'RE LIVING IN PITCH-BLACK DARKNESS. A HEARTBEAT AWAY FROM IT ENVELOPING US COMPLETELY.
SPEAKING OF THAT HEARTBEAT, HOW *IS* PATIENT NUMBER ONE, ANYWAY?
"HOW IS *DAGGER* HOLDING UP?"
BE STRONG, TANDY...JUST A BIT MORE...
"SHE'S THE ONLY SOURCE OF LIGHT FOR THE ENTIRE ISLAND OF MANHATTAN. WITHOUT HER, EVERY SINGLE ONE OF US WOULD BE DEAD AND DEVOURED BY THOSE--*THINGS* OUT THERE..."
PROBLEM IS, COUNTERACTING THE DARKFORCE IS--WELL, IT'S GONNA *KILL* HER. WHEN SHE STARTED THIS, SHE COULD DO IT FOR TEN, SOMETIMES EVEN TWELVE HOURS A DAY--
NOW WE'RE LUCKY IF WE GET *FOUR*. THE PHYSICAL DEMANDS ARE ONE THING, BUT MENTALLY--
--IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE SHE BREAKS.
WELL, DON'T BE TOO PESSIMISTIC, DOC. THE HELL THAT'S BROKEN LOOSE OUT THERE RIGHT NOW, SHE MIGHT OUTLAST US ALL.
CITY'S FALLING APART. THERE'S ONLY ONE PERSON WHO SEEMS TO KNOW HOW TO KEEP THINGS TOGETHER--
"--AND WE CAN'T LET HIM DO IT."
WHERE ARE THEY?!

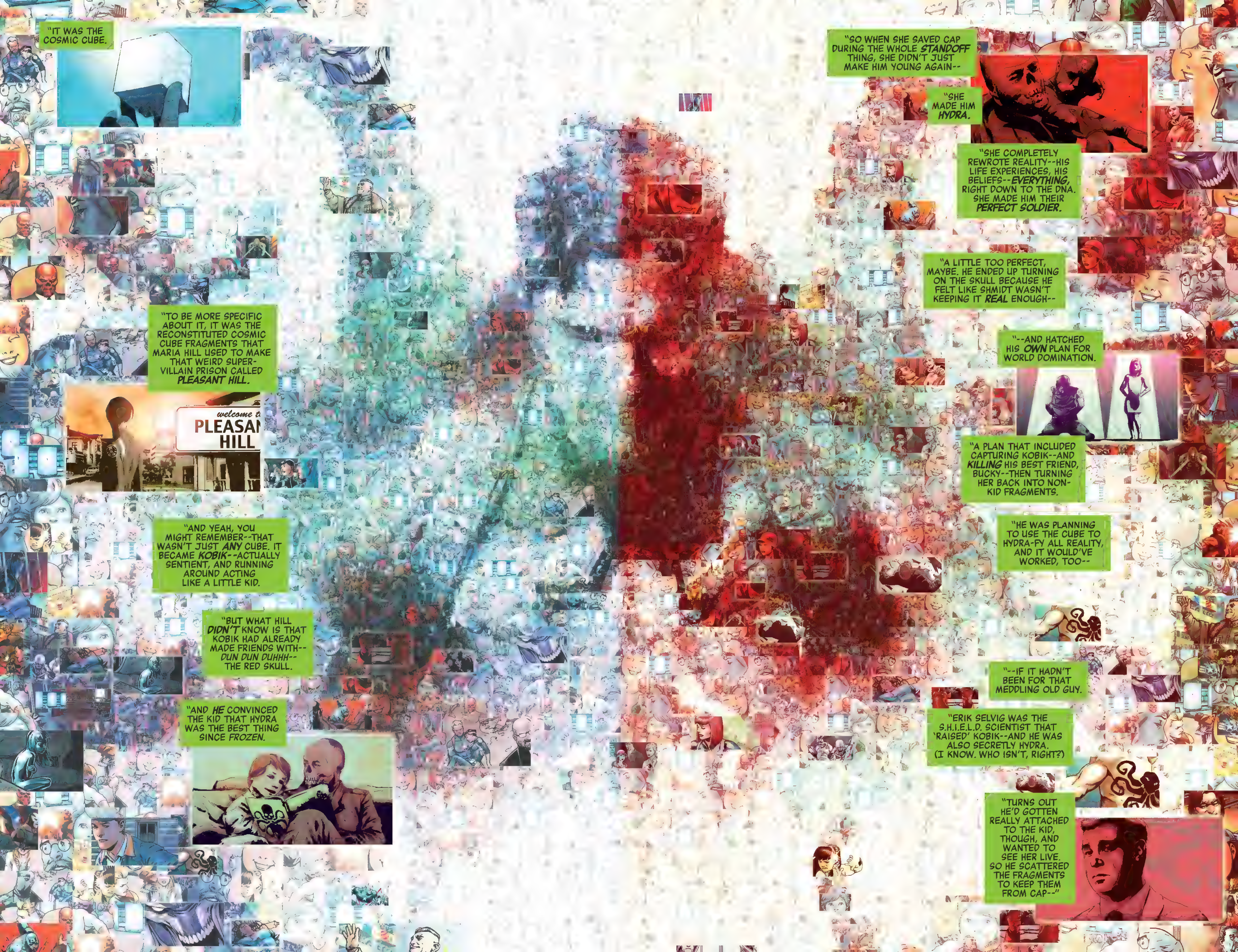

COME ON--WE *KNOW* YOU'VE GOT THE MEDS!
PLEASE-- I TOLD YOU--THEY DIDN'T COME THIS WEEK-- THEY SAID THEY DIDN'T HAVE ENOUGH--
YOU'RE LYING! GIVE 'EM UP NOW-- WE DON'T WANNA HAVE TO HURT ANYBODY!
WELL, YES, OF COURSE.
FEW OF US EVER *WANT* TO.
AT TIMES, HOWEVER, IT IS A MATTER OF *NECESSITY*. AND IN THESE DARK DAYS--
--THE NEED IS SOMETIMES GREATER THAN EVER.
M-MR. FISK-- WHAT ARE YOU--
I HAVE WATCHED MEN TURN INTO BLOODTHIRSTY SAVAGES OVER A LOAF OF BREAD. WATCHED MY CITY BURN TO THE GROUND AS WOMEN AND CHILDREN CRY OUT. BUT IN THE FACE OF ALL THAT--
--I TRY NOT TO *JUDGE*. IN FACT, I RECOGNIZE THAT MANY OF THESE ACTS SIMPLY REPRESENT THE NATURAL ORDER, MADE CLEARER NOW THAT SO MUCH ARTIFICE HAS BEEN STRUCK FROM OUR LIVES.
BLAMING MEN FOR THE THINGS THEY DO IS NO MORE RATIONAL THAN BLAMING THE LION AS HE TEARS INTO THE ANTELOPE'S FLESH.
LOOK, I-- CAN *EXPLAIN*-- THEY GET DRUG SHIPMENTS, SEE? FROM MERCY HOSPITAL.
WE WERE GONNA PAY YOU OUR TAXES ON IT, WE JUST WANTED TO TURN 'EM AROUND REAL QUICK--
*"WANTED."* HM. YOU SEE, THAT IS A VERY DIFFERENT THING ENTIRELY. AFTER ALL, THERE IS WHAT YOU *WANT*--

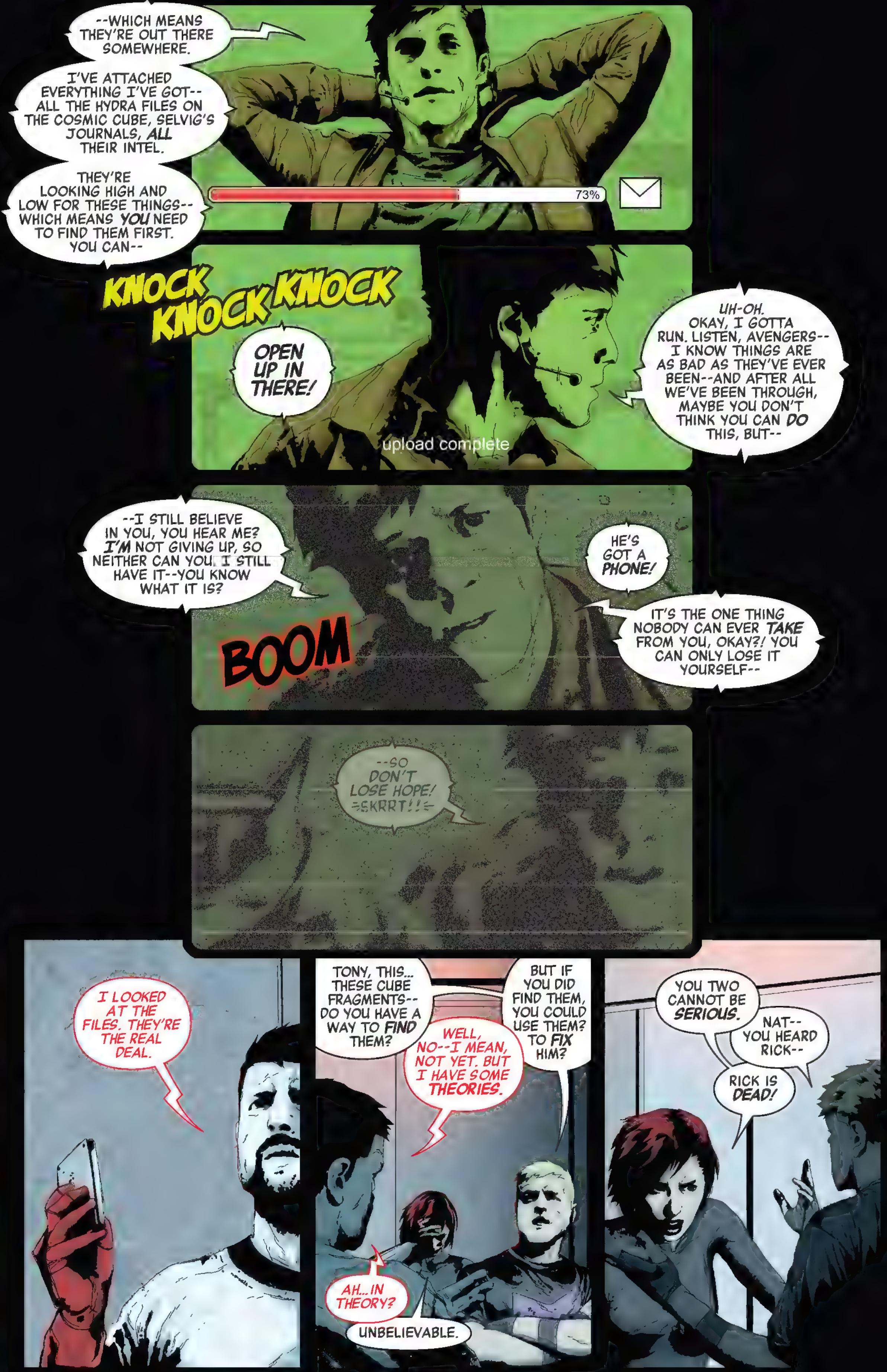

--AND THERE IS WHAT YOU **NEED.**
SBAM
NOW--I UNDERSTAND SOME **PROMISES** WERE MADE TO YOU FINE PEOPLE...
THEY WERE MADE BY SOME WITH GOOD INTENTIONS, PERHAPS, BUT NOT THE **RESOLVE** TO SEE THEM THROUGH.
I WILL **NOT** FAIL YOU AS THEY DID.
AND I WILL **NOT** LEAVE YOU AT THE MERCY OF MEN LIKE THESE.
THIS CHURCH WILL FALL UNDER MY PROTECTION. AND FOOD, MEDICINE, SUPPLIES--YOU WILL WANT FOR NONE OF IT. ALL I ASK IN RETURN IS THIS...
...ON THE DAY WHEN WE SEE THE SUN AGAIN, YOU REMEMBER--
--IT WAS **WILSON FISK** WHO KEPT YOU SAFE.

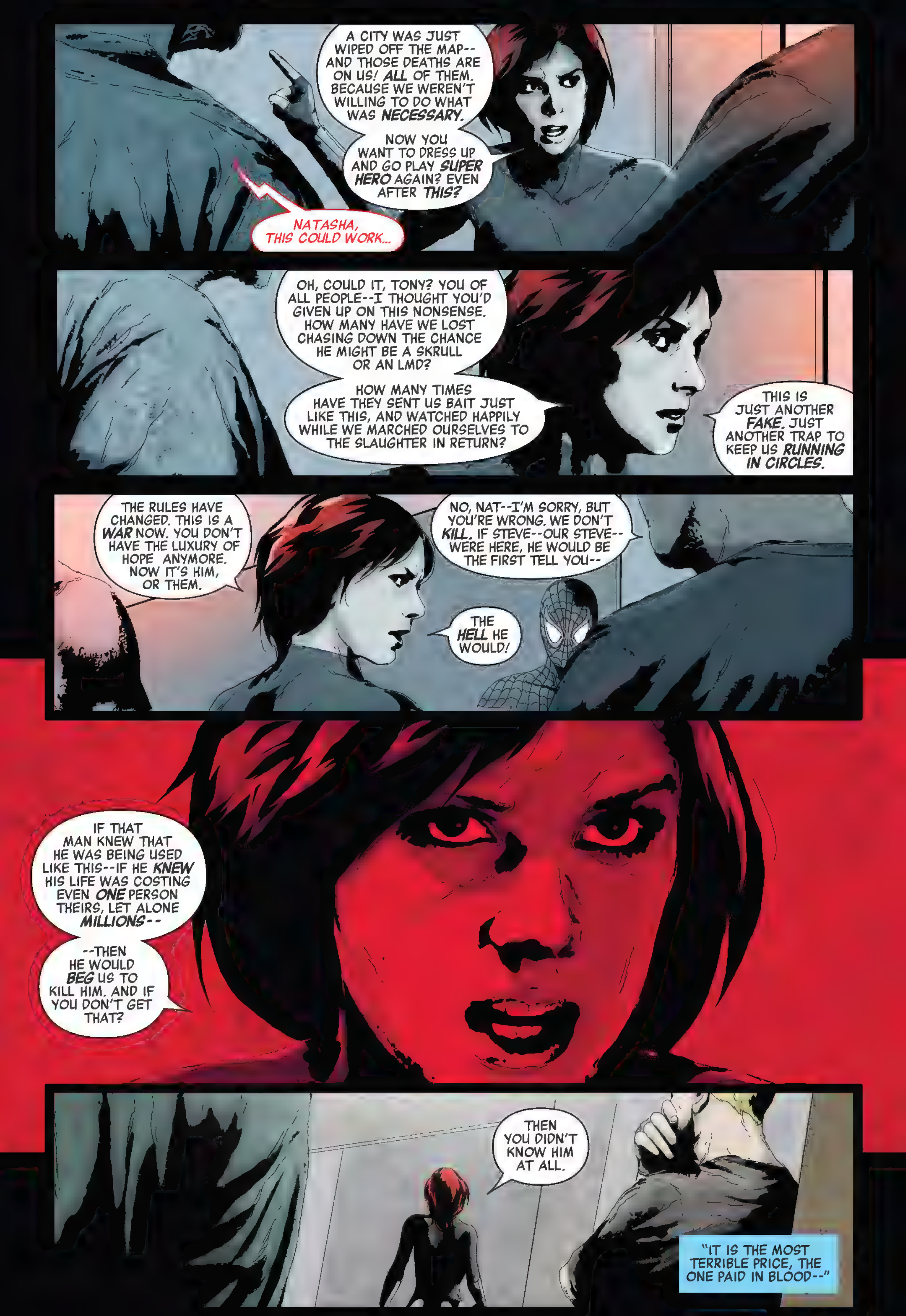

THE MOUNT.
IN THE ABSENCE OF HOPE, BROKEN AS WE WERE--
--THIS WAS THE TURNING POINT.
CHOICES WERE ABOUT TO BE MADE.
AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES WOULD NEVER BE FORGOTTEN.
IT WAS THE DAY TWO OF US STOOD, AND TWO PATHS WERE LAID OUT.
A FAMILIAR STORY, BUT SOMEHOW DIFFERENT THIS TIME.
ONE WAS LIGHT.
BLAM!
AND THE OTHER WAS DARKNESS.

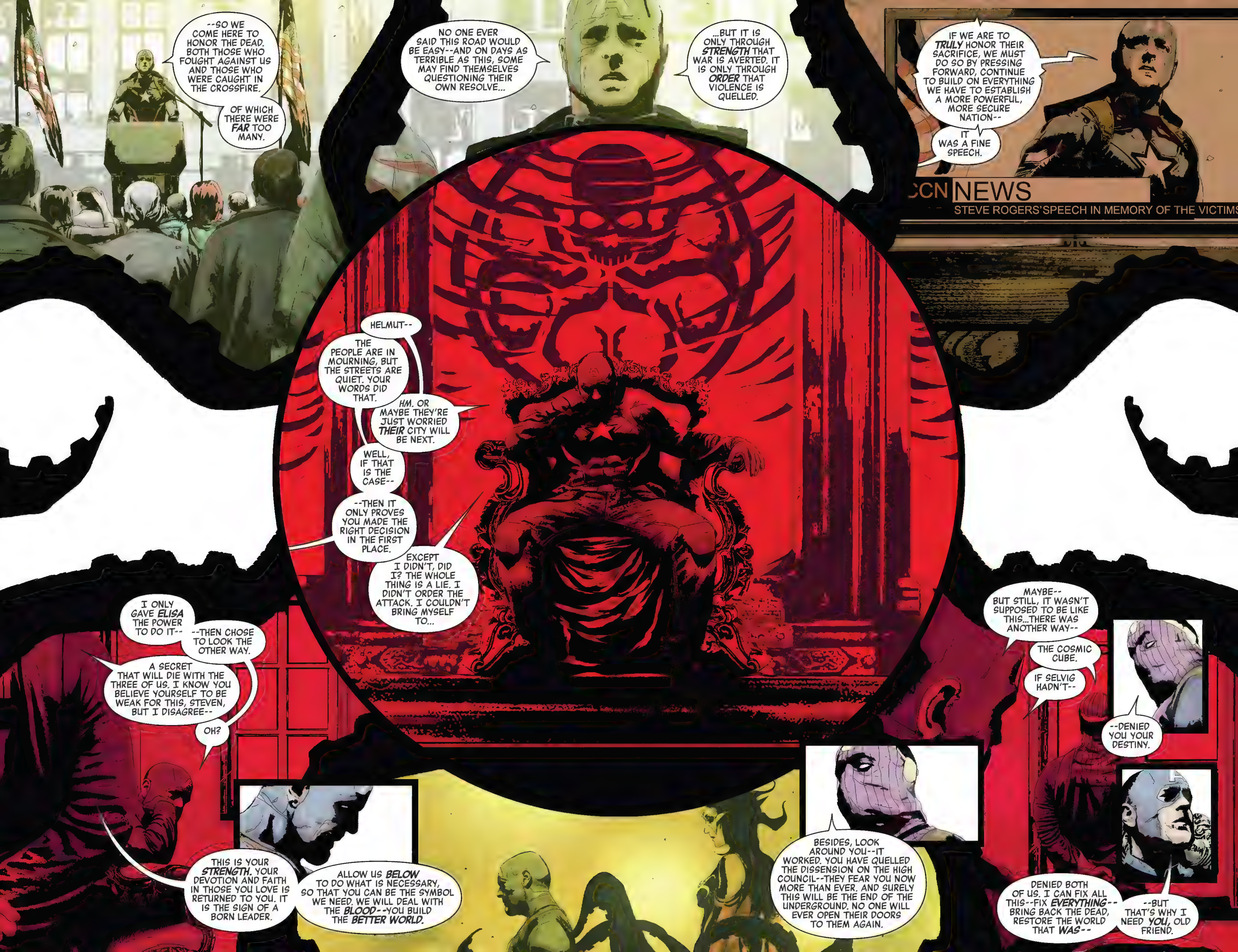

WE DO NOT HAVE TIME TO *MOURN.*
WE DO NOT HAVE TIME TO BE *ANGRY.*
"WE ONLY HAVE THE TIME TO *ACT.*"
I AM LOOKING FOR A TEAM OF VOLUNTEERS FOR THE MISSION WE *ALL* KNOW WE HAVE TO UNDERTAKE.
"WE'RE CALLED *AVENGERS*, AND THESE PEOPLE--THAT CITY--DEMAND *VENGEANCE.*"
THE MAN WHO *KILLED* THEM MUST ANSWER FOR WHAT HE'S DONE HERE.
"NO MORE GAMES. THIS TIME WE DON'T SHOOT TO WOUND."
WE WILL CUT THE HEAD OFF THIS BEAST AND TAKE OUR CHANCES WITH WHAT GROWS IN ITS PLACE. WE HAVE NO OTHER CHOICE LEFT--
ACTUALLY--

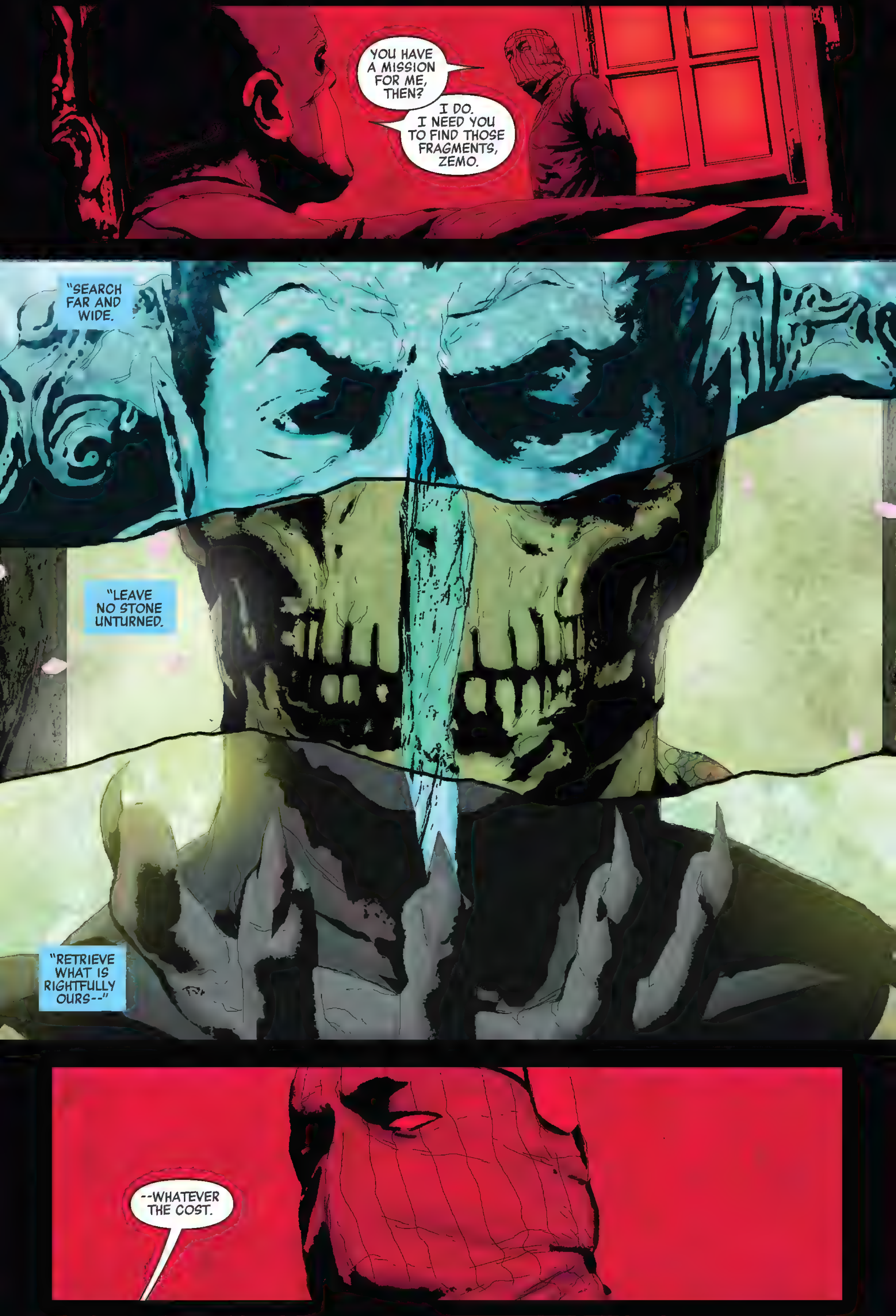

NO, TONY. NOT NOW. THIS IS NOT THE TIME FOR ONE OF YOUR DRUNKEN EPISODES--
--MAYBE WE DO.
I AM ACTUALLY FRIGHTENINGLY LUCID AT THE MOMENT, NAT.
BUT LOOK, I--I DO GET WHY A LOT OF YOU MIGHT NOT TRUST ME, OR--WANT TO HEAR WHAT I HAVE TO SAY.
SO WITH THAT IN MIND, I'D LIKE TO GIVE THE FLOOR TO A SPECIAL GUEST. OUR OLD PAL--
--RICK JONES.
UH, HEY EVERYBODY--
--IF YOU'RE GETTING THIS MESSAGE, LET'S BE HONEST--THERE'S A GOOD CHANCE I'VE BEEN MADE DEAD. AND YEAH, THAT SUCKS.
SEE--I'M RECORDING THIS FROM SOME SUPER-SECRET HYDRA HOLDING FACILITY.
IT'S ACTUALLY NOT THAT BAD. EXCEPTIONAL BLU-RAY LIBRARY, MEMORY FOAM MATTRESSES WITH TEMPERATURE CONTROL, AN ESPRESSO MACHINE, BUT--THAT'S NOT THE POINT.
THE POINT IS, I JUST TOOK ADVANTAGE OF MY STAY HERE--
--AND HACKED INTO HYDRA'S TOP-CLEARANCE-LEVEL DATABASE. THEY'RE NOT GONNA BE TOO HAPPY ABOUT THAT, OBVIOUSLY, BUT YOU GUYS WILL BE. YOU KNOW WHY?
BECAUSE I FOUND SOMETHING THAT IS GONNA BLOW THIS SCENE WIDE OPEN. SOMETHING THAT IS GONNA CHANGE EVERYTHING. SEE--
--I KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO CAPTAIN AMERICA.
YOU READY FOR THIS?

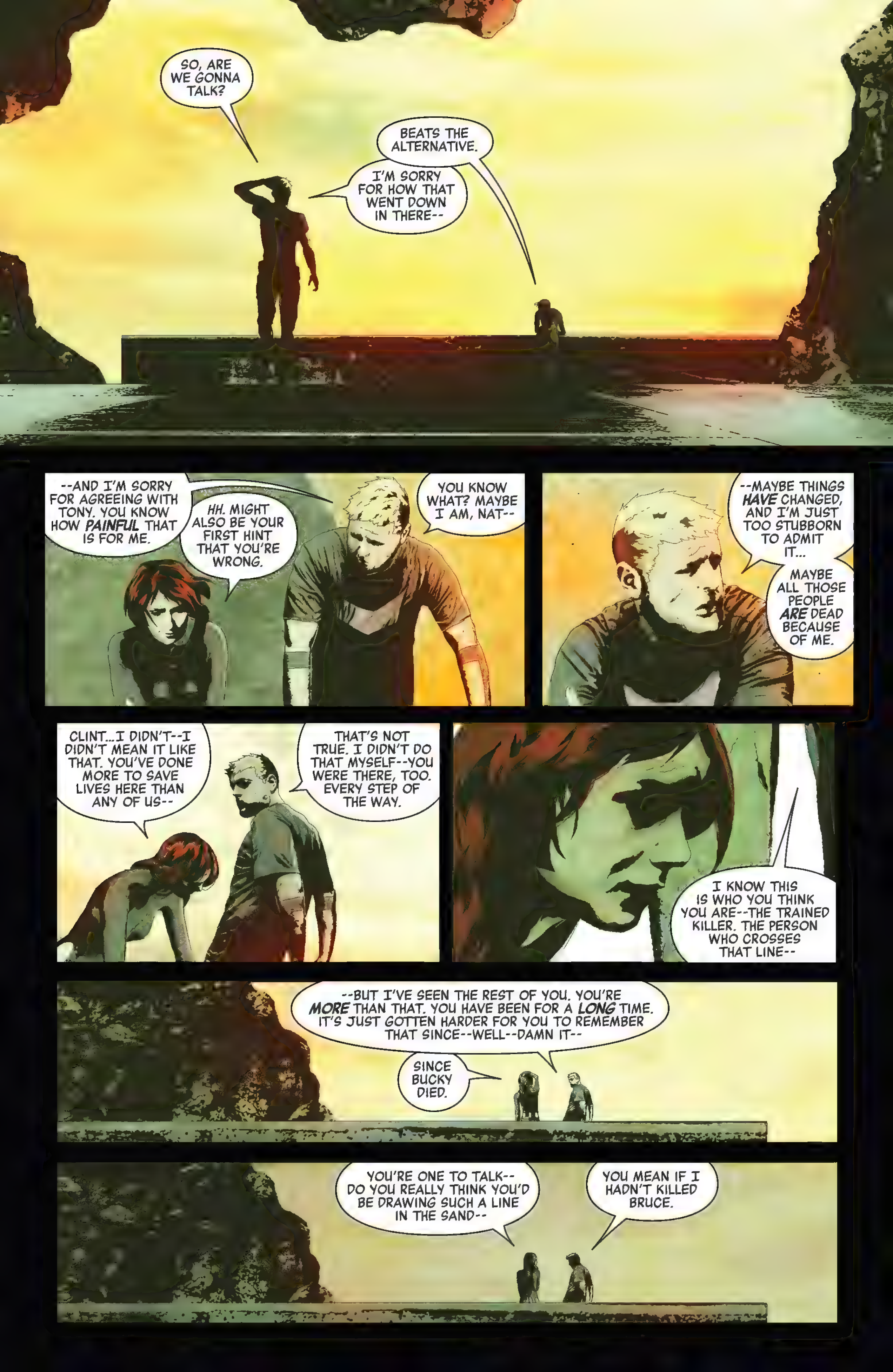

"IT WAS THE COSMIC CUBE.
"TO BE MORE SPECIFIC ABOUT IT, IT WAS THE RECONSTITUTED COSMIC CUBE FRAGMENTS THAT MARIA HILL USED TO MAKE THAT WEIRD SUPER-VILLAIN PRISON CALLED *PLEASANT HILL.*
welcome t
PLEASAN
HILL
"AND YEAH, YOU MIGHT REMEMBER--THAT WASN'T JUST **ANY** CUBE. IT BECAME **KOBIK**--ACTUALLY SENTIENT, AND RUNNING AROUND ACTING LIKE A LITTLE KID.
"BUT WHAT HILL ***DIDN'T*** KNOW IS THAT KOBIK HAD ALREADY MADE FRIENDS WITH-- *DUN DUN DUHHH*-- THE RED SKULL.
"AND ***HE*** CONVINCED THE KID THAT HYDRA WAS THE BEST THING SINCE *FROZEN.*
"SO WHEN SHE SAVED CAP DURING THE WHOLE ***STANDOFF*** THING, SHE DIDN'T JUST MAKE HIM YOUNG AGAIN--
"SHE MADE HIM ***HYDRA.***
"SHE COMPLETELY REWROTE REALITY--HIS LIFE EXPERIENCES, HIS BELIEFS--***EVERYTHING,*** RIGHT DOWN TO THE DNA. SHE MADE HIM THEIR ***PERFECT SOLDIER.***
"A LITTLE TOO PERFECT, MAYBE. HE ENDED UP TURNING ON THE SKULL BECAUSE HE FELT LIKE SHMIDT WASN'T KEEPING IT ***REAL*** ENOUGH--
"--AND HATCHED HIS ***OWN*** PLAN FOR WORLD DOMINATION.
"A PLAN THAT INCLUDED CAPTURING KOBIK--AND ***KILLING*** HIS BEST FRIEND, BUCKY--THEN TURNING HER BACK INTO NON-KID FRAGMENTS.
"HE WAS PLANNING TO USE THE CUBE TO HYDRA-FY ALL REALITY, AND IT WOULD'VE WORKED, TOO--
"--IF IT HADN'T BEEN FOR THAT MEDDLING OLD GUY.
"ERIK SELVIG WAS THE S.H.I.E.L.D. SCIENTIST THAT 'RAISED' KOBIK--AND HE WAS ALSO SECRETLY HYDRA. (I KNOW. WHO ISN'T, RIGHT?)
"TURNS OUT HE'D GOTTEN REALLY ATTACHED TO THE KID, THOUGH, AND WANTED TO SEE HER LIVE. SO HE SCATTERED THE FRAGMENTS TO KEEP THEM FROM CAP--"

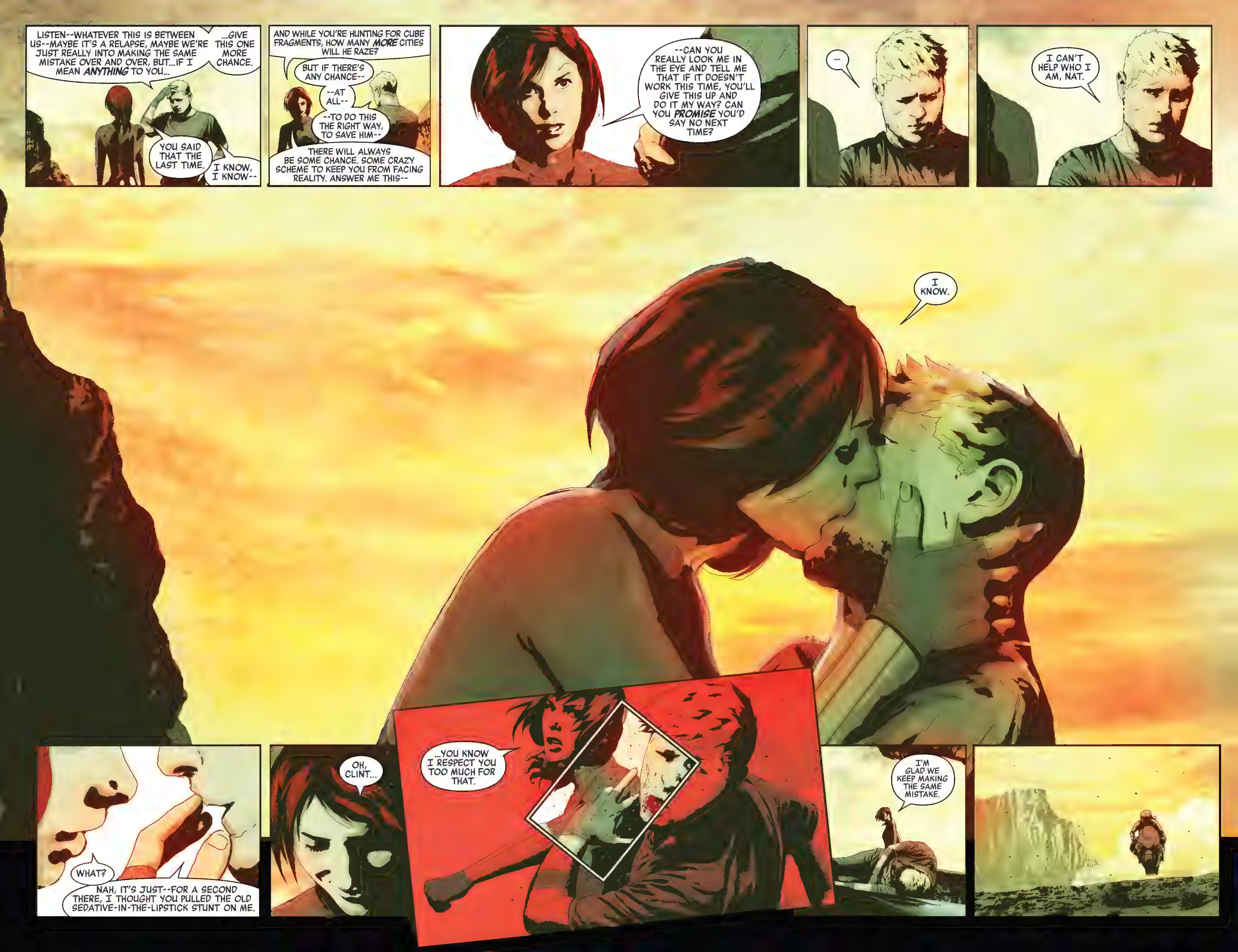

--WHICH MEANS THEY'RE OUT THERE SOMEWHERE.
I'VE ATTACHED EVERYTHING I'VE GOT--ALL THE HYDRA FILES ON THE COSMIC CUBE, SELVIG'S JOURNALS, *ALL* THEIR INTEL.
THEY'RE LOOKING HIGH AND LOW FOR THESE THINGS--WHICH MEANS *YOU* NEED TO FIND THEM FIRST. YOU CAN--
73%
KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK
OPEN UP IN THERE!
UH-OH. OKAY, I GOTTA RUN. LISTEN, AVENGERS--I KNOW THINGS ARE AS BAD AS THEY'VE EVER BEEN--AND AFTER ALL WE'VE BEEN THROUGH, MAYBE YOU DON'T THINK YOU CAN *DO* THIS, BUT--
upload complete
--I STILL BELIEVE IN YOU, YOU HEAR ME? *I'M* NOT GIVING UP, SO NEITHER CAN YOU. I STILL HAVE IT--YOU KNOW WHAT IT IS?
HE'S GOT A *PHONE!*
IT'S THE ONE THING NOBODY CAN EVER *TAKE* FROM YOU, OKAY?! YOU CAN ONLY LOSE IT YOURSELF--
BOOM
--SO DON'T LOSE HOPE! =SKRRT!!=
I LOOKED AT THE FILES. THEY'RE THE REAL DEAL.
TONY, THIS... THESE CUBE FRAGMENTS--DO YOU HAVE A WAY TO *FIND* THEM?
BUT IF YOU DID FIND THEM, YOU COULD USE THEM? TO *FIX* HIM?
WELL, NO--I MEAN, NOT YET. BUT I HAVE SOME *THEORIES.*
AH... IN THEORY?
UNBELIEVABLE.
YOU TWO CANNOT BE *SERIOUS.*
NAT--YOU HEARD RICK--
RICK IS *DEAD!*

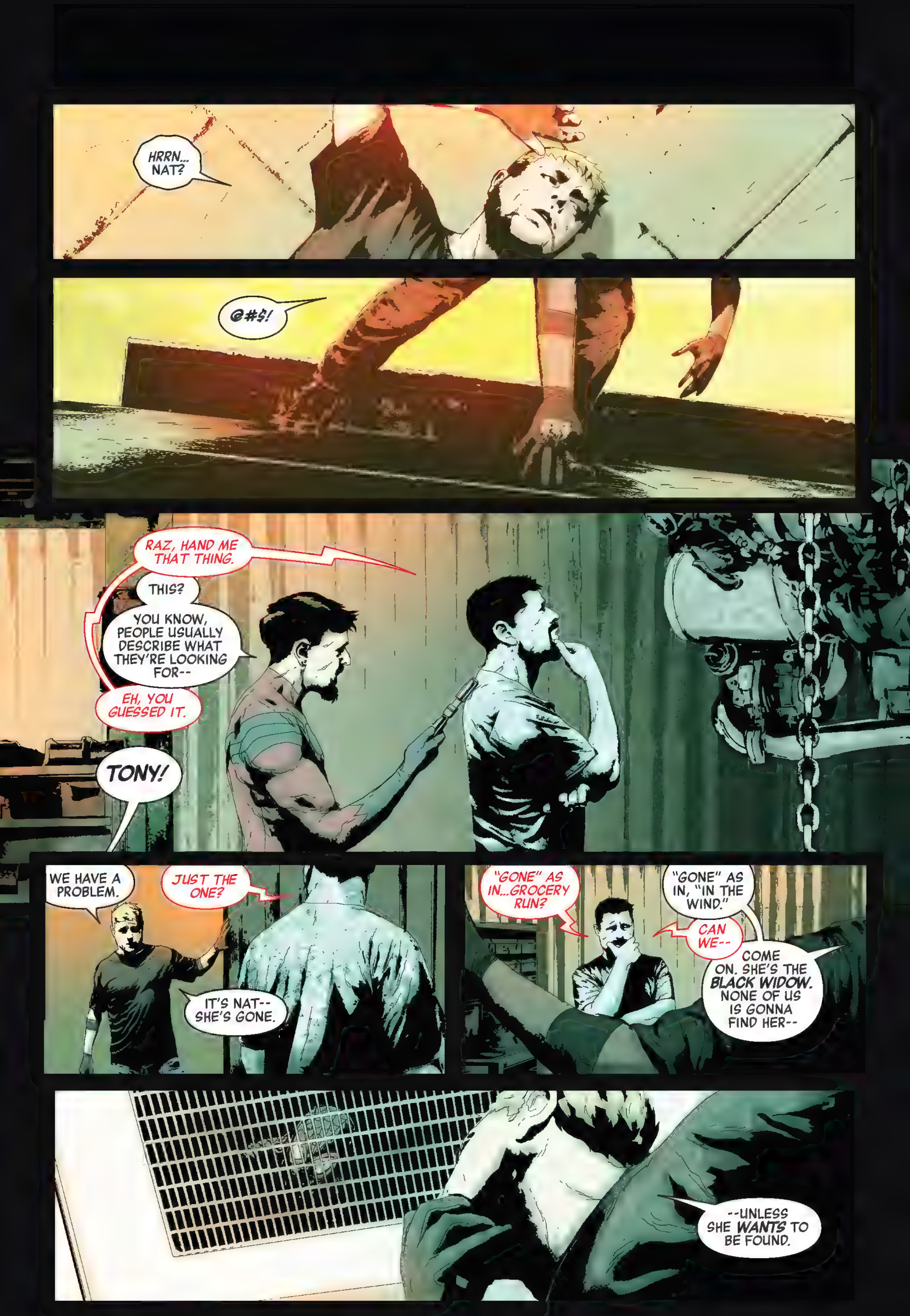

A CITY WAS JUST WIPED OFF THE MAP--AND THOSE DEATHS ARE ON US! ALL OF THEM. BECAUSE WE WEREN'T WILLING TO DO WHAT WAS NECESSARY.
NOW YOU WANT TO DRESS UP AND GO PLAY SUPER HERO AGAIN? EVEN AFTER THIS?
NATASHA, THIS COULD WORK...
OH, COULD IT, TONY? YOU OF ALL PEOPLE--I THOUGHT YOU'D GIVEN UP ON THIS NONSENSE. HOW MANY HAVE WE LOST CHASING DOWN THE CHANCE HE MIGHT BE A SKRULL OR AN LMD?
HOW MANY TIMES HAVE THEY SENT US BAIT JUST LIKE THIS, AND WATCHED HAPPILY WHILE WE MARCHED OURSELVES TO THE SLAUGHTER IN RETURN?
THIS IS JUST ANOTHER FAKE. JUST ANOTHER TRAP TO KEEP US RUNNING IN CIRCLES.
THE RULES HAVE CHANGED. THIS IS A WAR NOW. YOU DON'T HAVE THE LUXURY OF HOPE ANYMORE. NOW IT'S HIM, OR THEM.
NO, NAT--I'M SORRY, BUT YOU'RE WRONG. WE DON'T KILL. IF STEVE--OUR STEVE--WERE HERE, HE WOULD BE THE FIRST TELL YOU--
THE HELL HE WOULD!
IF THAT MAN KNEW THAT HE WAS BEING USED LIKE THIS--IF HE KNEW HIS LIFE WAS COSTING EVEN ONE PERSON THEIRS, LET ALONE MILLIONS--
--THEN HE WOULD BEG US TO KILL HIM. AND IF YOU DON'T GET THAT?
THEN YOU DIDN'T KNOW HIM AT ALL.
"IT IS THE MOST TERRIBLE PRICE, THE ONE PAID IN BLOOD--"

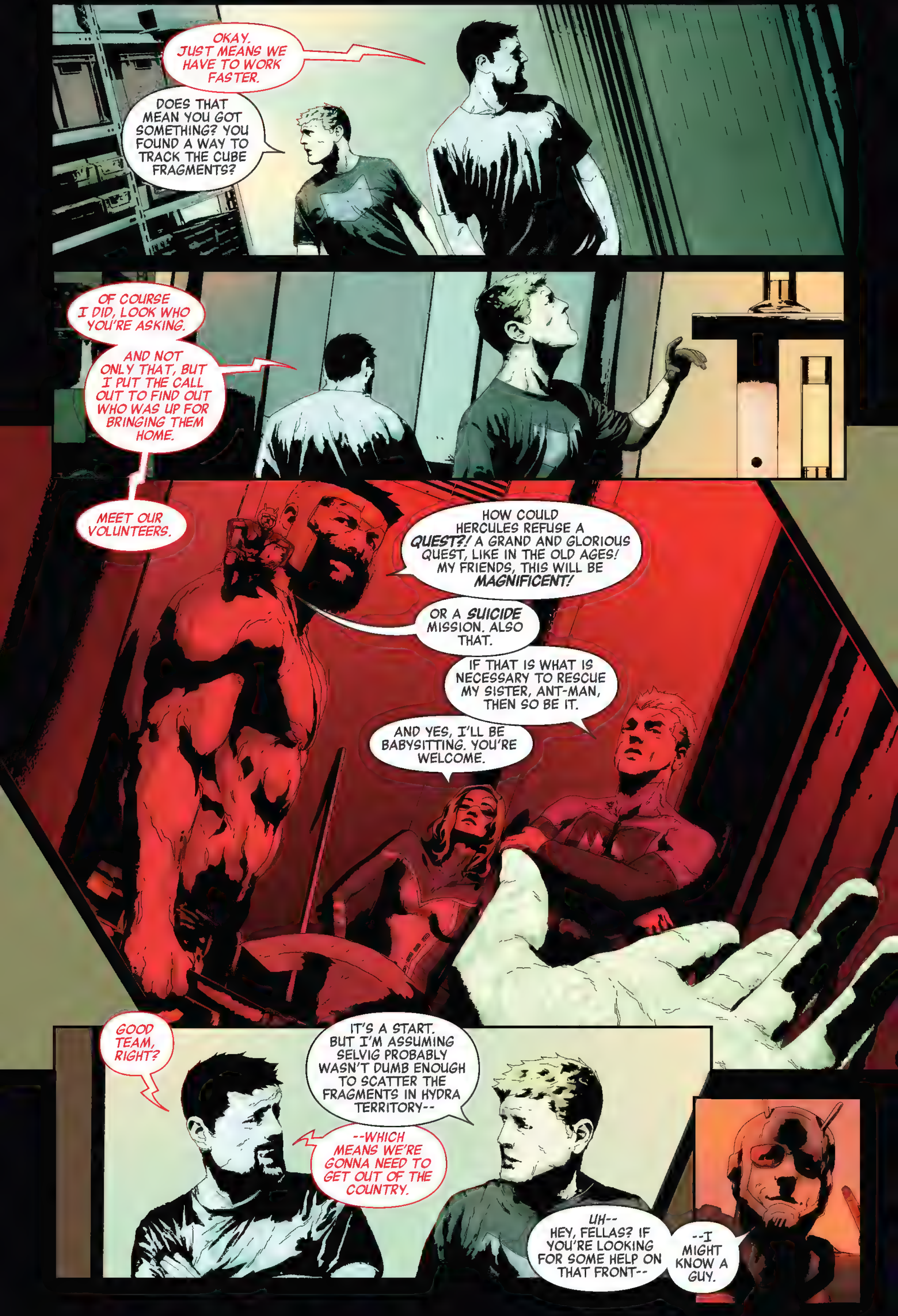

--SO WE COME HERE TO HONOR THE DEAD. BOTH THOSE WHO FOUGHT AGAINST US AND THOSE WHO WERE CAUGHT IN THE CROSSFIRE.
OF WHICH THERE WERE *FAR* TOO MANY.
NO ONE EVER SAID THIS ROAD WOULD BE EASY--AND ON DAYS AS TERRIBLE AS THIS, SOME MAY FIND THEMSELVES QUESTIONING THEIR OWN RESOLVE...
...BUT IT IS ONLY THROUGH *STRENGTH* THAT WAR IS AVERTED. IT IS ONLY THROUGH *ORDER* THAT VIOLENCE IS QUELLED.
IF WE ARE TO *TRULY* HONOR THEIR SACRIFICE, WE MUST DO SO BY PRESSING FORWARD, CONTINUE TO BUILD ON EVERYTHING WE HAVE TO ESTABLISH A MORE POWERFUL, MORE SECURE NATION--
IT WAS A FINE SPEECH.
CCN NEWS
STEVE ROGERS'SPEECH IN MEMORY OF THE VICTIMS
HELMUT--
THE PEOPLE ARE IN MOURNING, BUT THE STREETS ARE QUIET. YOUR WORDS DID THAT.
HM. OR MAYBE THEY'RE JUST WORRIED *THEIR* CITY WILL BE NEXT.
WELL, IF THAT IS THE CASE--
--THEN IT ONLY PROVES YOU MADE THE RIGHT DECISION IN THE FIRST PLACE.
EXCEPT I DIDN'T, DID I? THE WHOLE THING IS A LIE. I DIDN'T ORDER THE ATTACK. I COULDN'T BRING MYSELF TO...
I ONLY GAVE *ELISA* THE POWER TO DO IT--
--THEN CHOSE TO LOOK THE OTHER WAY.
A SECRET THAT WILL DIE WITH THE THREE OF US. I KNOW YOU BELIEVE YOURSELF TO BE WEAK FOR THIS, STEVEN, BUT I DISAGREE--
OH?
THIS IS YOUR *STRENGTH.* YOUR DEVOTION AND FAITH IN THOSE YOU LOVE IS RETURNED TO YOU. IT IS THE SIGN OF A BORN LEADER.
ALLOW US *BELOW* TO DO WHAT IS NECESSARY, SO THAT YOU CAN BE THE SYMBOL WE NEED. WE WILL DEAL WITH THE *BLOOD*--YOU BUILD THE *BETTER WORLD.*
BESIDES, LOOK AROUND YOU--IT WORKED. YOU HAVE QUELLED THE DISSENSION ON THE HIGH COUNCIL--THEY FEAR YOU NOW MORE THAN EVER. AND SURELY THIS WILL BE THE END OF THE UNDERGROUND. NO ONE WILL EVER OPEN THEIR DOORS TO THEM AGAIN.
MAYBE-- BUT STILL, IT WASN'T SUPPOSED TO BE LIKE THIS...THERE WAS ANOTHER WAY--
THE COSMIC CUBE.
IF SELVIG HADN'T--
--DENIED YOU YOUR DESTINY.
DENIED BOTH OF US. I CAN FIX ALL THIS--FIX *EVERYTHING*--BRING BACK THE DEAD, RESTORE THE WORLD THAT *WAS*--
--BUT THAT'S WHY I NEED *YOU,* OLD FRIEND.

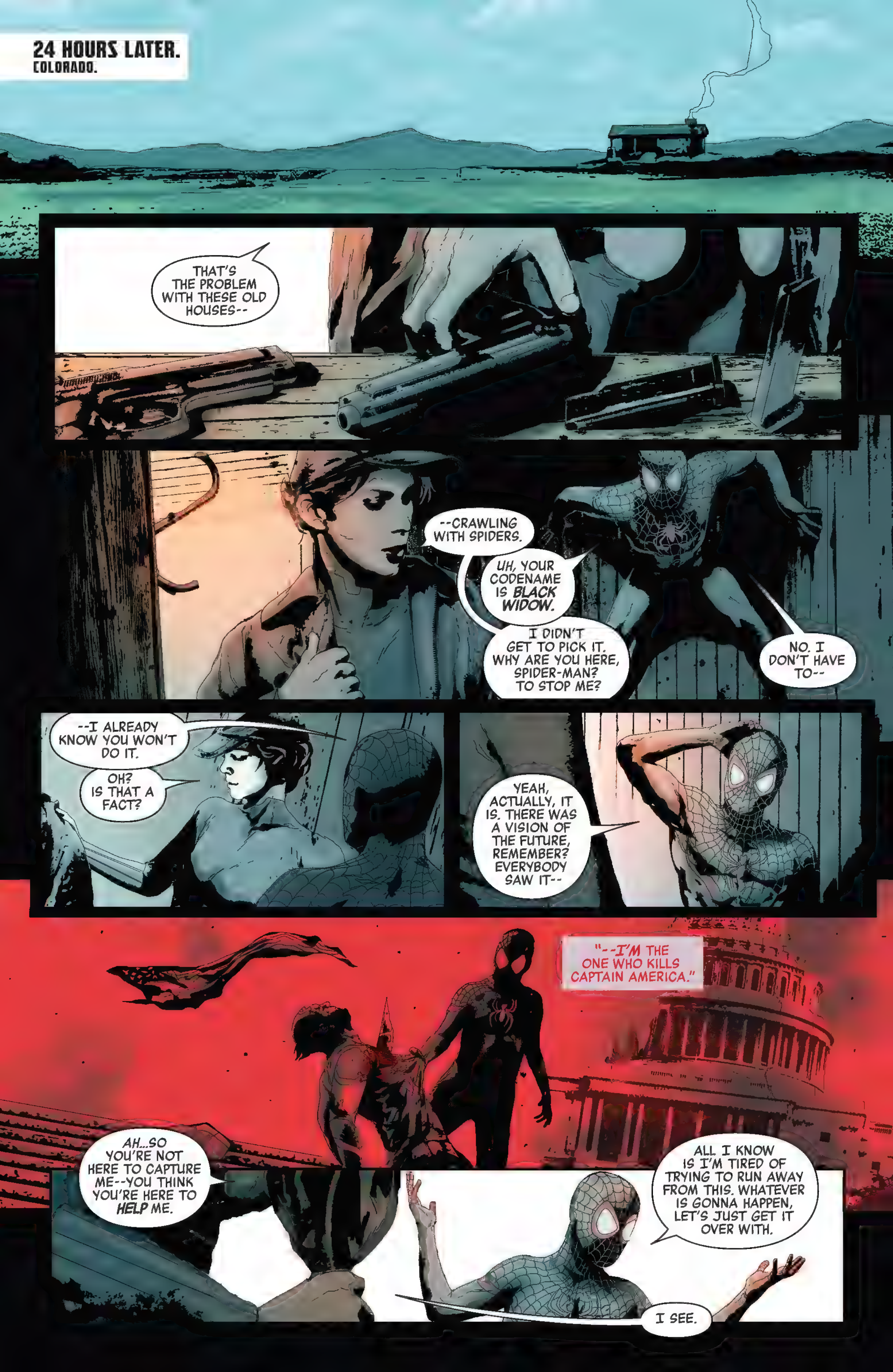

YOU HAVE A MISSION FOR ME, THEN?
I DO. I NEED YOU TO FIND THOSE FRAGMENTS, ZEMO.
"SEARCH FAR AND WIDE.
"LEAVE NO STONE UNTURNED.
"RETRIEVE WHAT IS RIGHTFULLY OURS--"
--WHATEVER THE COST.

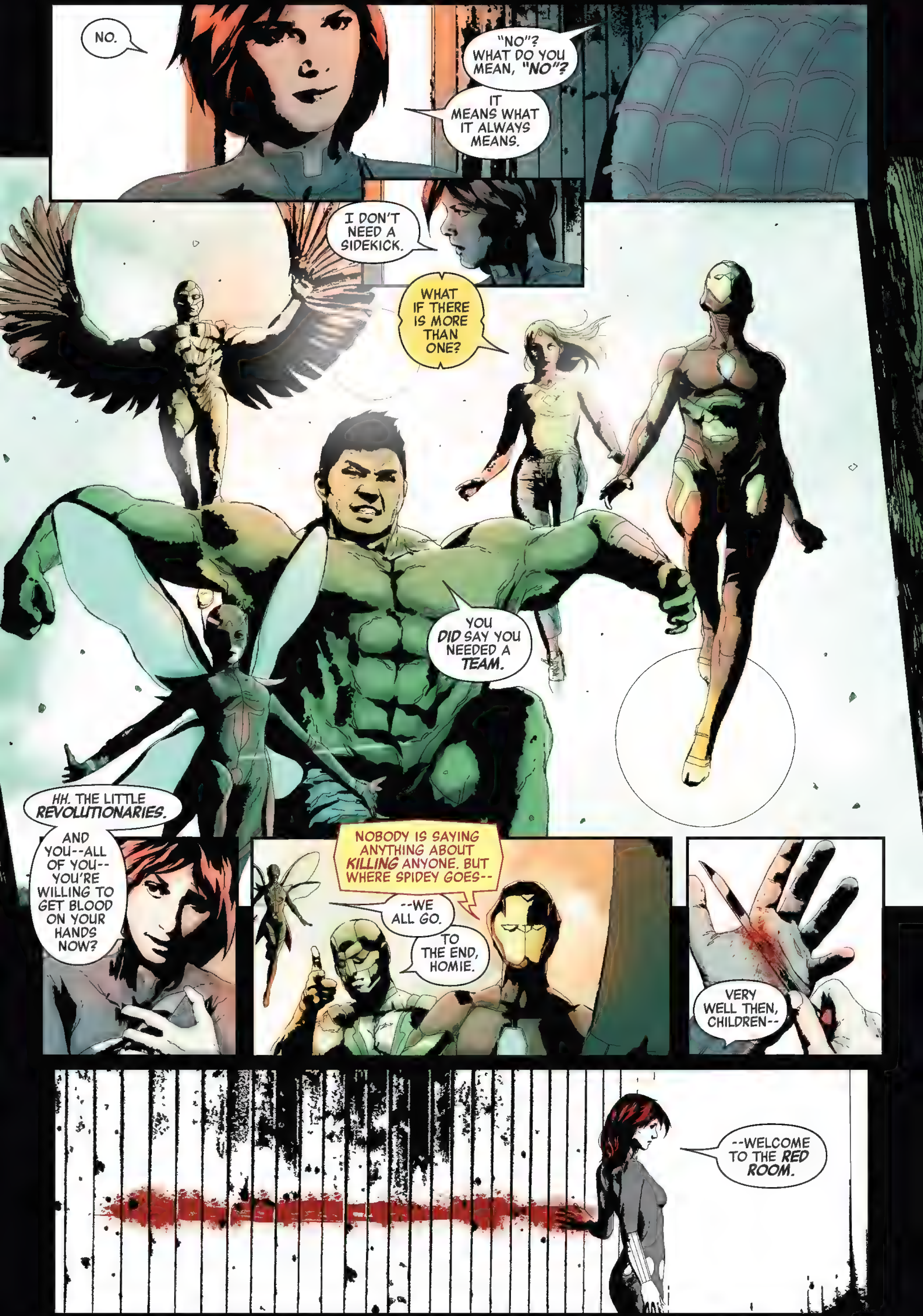

SO, ARE WE GONNA TALK?
BEATS THE ALTERNATIVE.
I'M SORRY FOR HOW THAT WENT DOWN IN THERE--
--AND I'M SORRY FOR AGREEING WITH TONY. YOU KNOW HOW *PAINFUL* THAT IS FOR ME.
HH. MIGHT ALSO BE YOUR FIRST HINT THAT YOU'RE WRONG.
YOU KNOW WHAT? MAYBE I AM, NAT--
--MAYBE THINGS *HAVE* CHANGED, AND I'M JUST TOO STUBBORN TO ADMIT IT...
MAYBE ALL THOSE PEOPLE *ARE* DEAD BECAUSE OF ME.
CLINT...I DIDN'T--I DIDN'T MEAN IT LIKE THAT. YOU'VE DONE MORE TO SAVE LIVES HERE THAN ANY OF US--
THAT'S NOT TRUE. I DIDN'T DO THAT MYSELF--YOU WERE THERE, TOO. EVERY STEP OF THE WAY.
I KNOW THIS IS WHO YOU THINK YOU ARE--THE TRAINED KILLER. THE PERSON WHO CROSSES THAT LINE--
--BUT I'VE SEEN THE REST OF YOU. YOU'RE *MORE* THAN THAT. YOU HAVE BEEN FOR A *LONG* TIME. IT'S JUST GOTTEN HARDER FOR YOU TO REMEMBER THAT SINCE--WELL--DAMN IT--
SINCE BUCKY DIED.
YOU'RE ONE TO TALK--DO YOU REALLY THINK YOU'D BE DRAWING SUCH A LINE IN THE SAND--
YOU MEAN IF I HADN'T KILLED BRUCE.

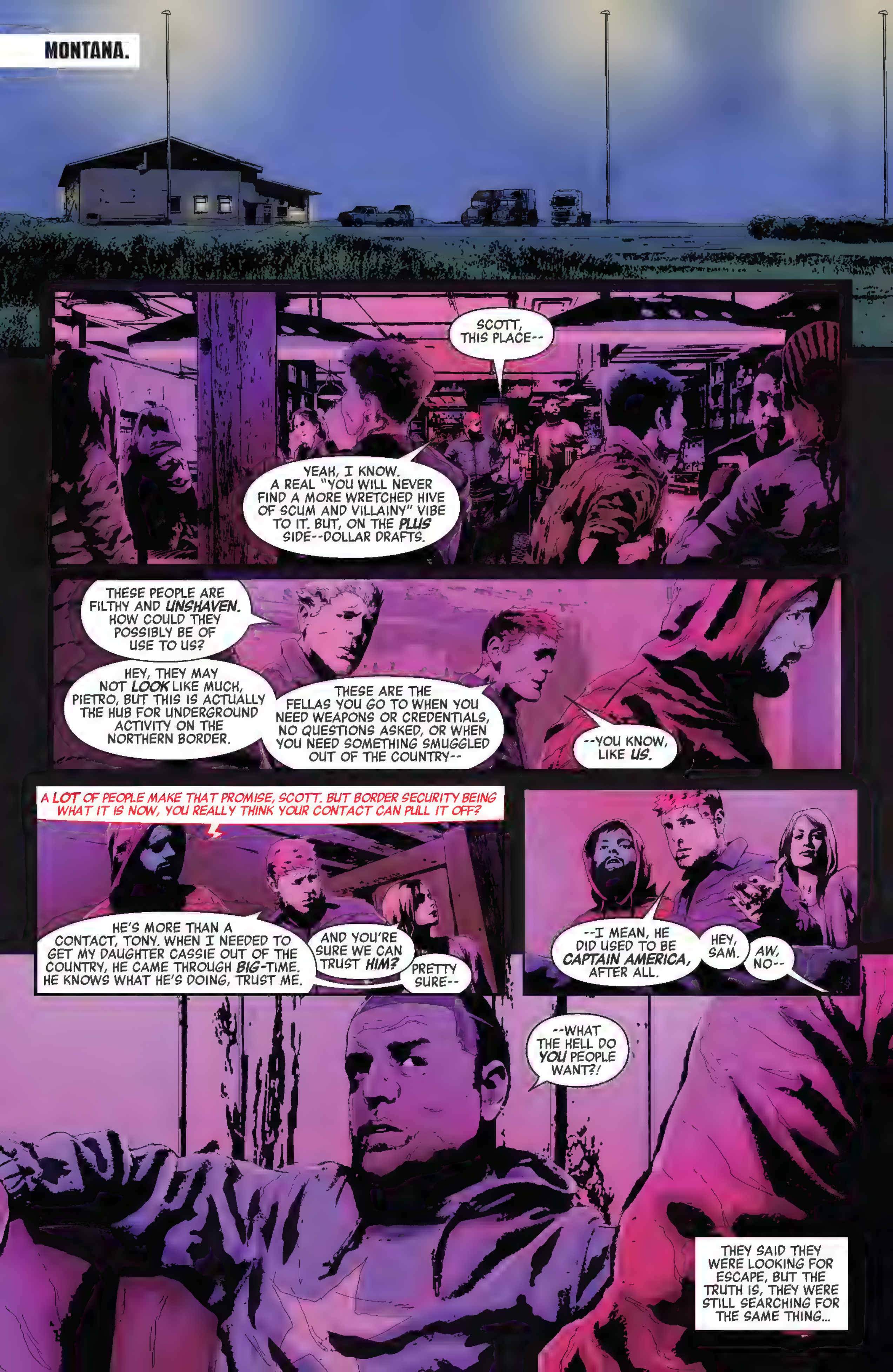

LISTEN--WHATEVER THIS IS BETWEEN US--MAYBE IT'S A RELAPSE, MAYBE WE'RE JUST REALLY INTO MAKING THE SAME MISTAKE OVER AND OVER, BUT...IF I MEAN *ANYTHING* TO YOU...
...GIVE THIS ONE MORE CHANCE.
YOU SAID THAT THE LAST TIME.
I KNOW, I KNOW--
AND WHILE YOU'RE HUNTING FOR CUBE FRAGMENTS, HOW MANY *MORE* CITIES WILL HE RAZE?
BUT IF THERE'S ANY CHANCE--
--AT ALL--
--TO DO THIS THE RIGHT WAY, TO SAVE HIM--
THERE WILL ALWAYS BE SOME CHANCE. SOME CRAZY SCHEME TO KEEP YOU FROM FACING REALITY. ANSWER ME THIS--
--CAN YOU REALLY LOOK ME IN THE EYE AND TELL ME THAT IF IT DOESN'T WORK THIS TIME, YOU'LL GIVE THIS UP AND DO IT MY WAY? CAN YOU *PROMISE* YOU'D SAY NO NEXT TIME?
...
I CAN'T HELP WHO I AM, NAT.
I KNOW.
WHAT?
NAH, IT'S JUST--FOR A SECOND THERE, I THOUGHT YOU PULLED THE OLD SEDATIVE-IN-THE-LIPSTICK STUNT ON ME.
OH, CLINT...
...YOU KNOW I RESPECT YOU TOO MUCH FOR THAT.
I'M GLAD WE KEEP MAKING THE SAME MISTAKE.

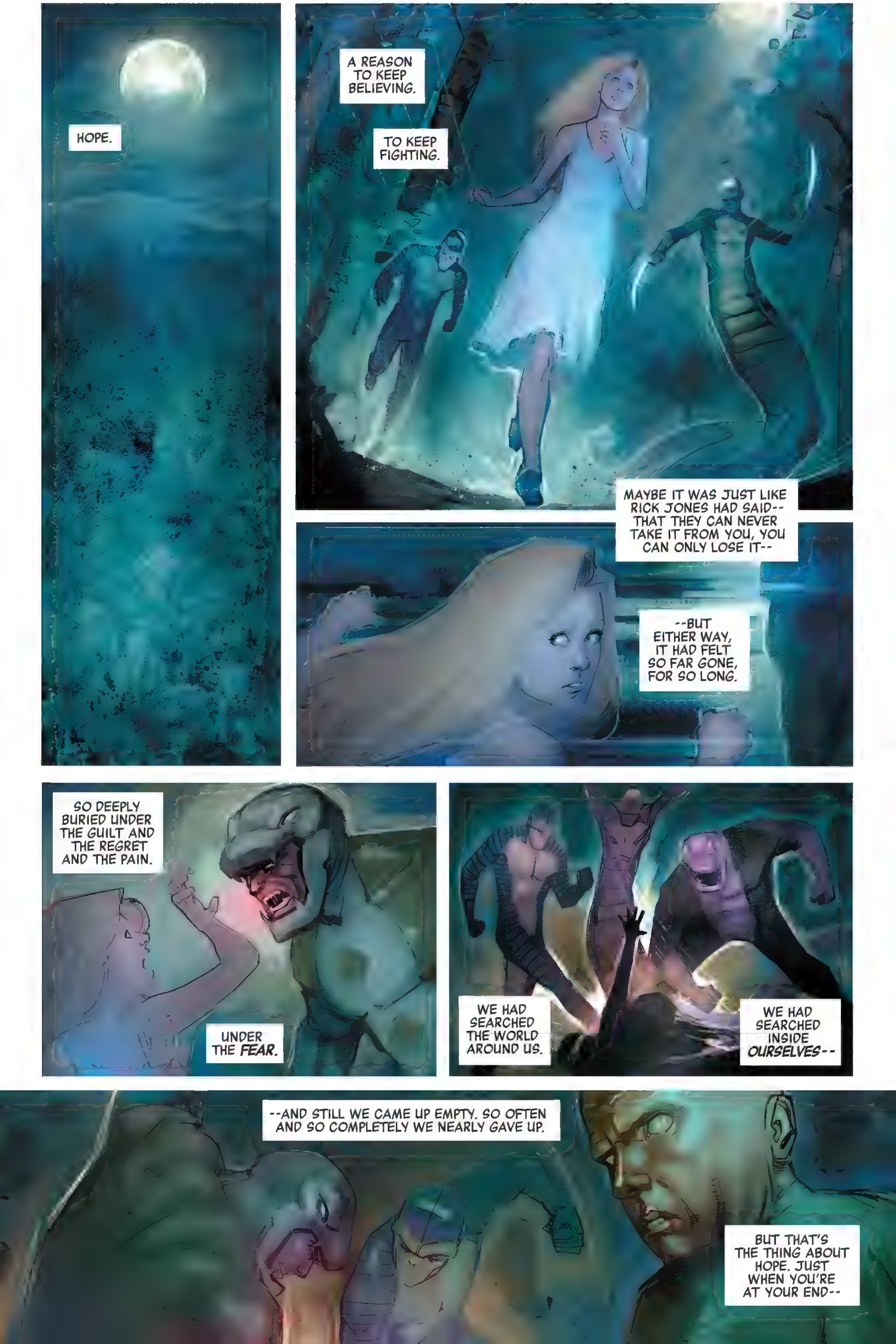

HRRN... NAT?
@#$!
RAZ, HAND ME THAT THING.
THIS?
YOU KNOW, PEOPLE USUALLY DESCRIBE WHAT THEY'RE LOOKING FOR--
EH, YOU GUESSED IT.
TONY!
WE HAVE A PROBLEM.
JUST THE ONE?
IT'S NAT-- SHE'S GONE.
"GONE" AS IN...GROCERY RUN?
"GONE" AS IN, "IN THE WIND."
CAN WE--
COME ON. SHE'S THE BLACK WIDOW. NONE OF US IS GONNA FIND HER--
--UNLESS SHE WANTS TO BE FOUND.

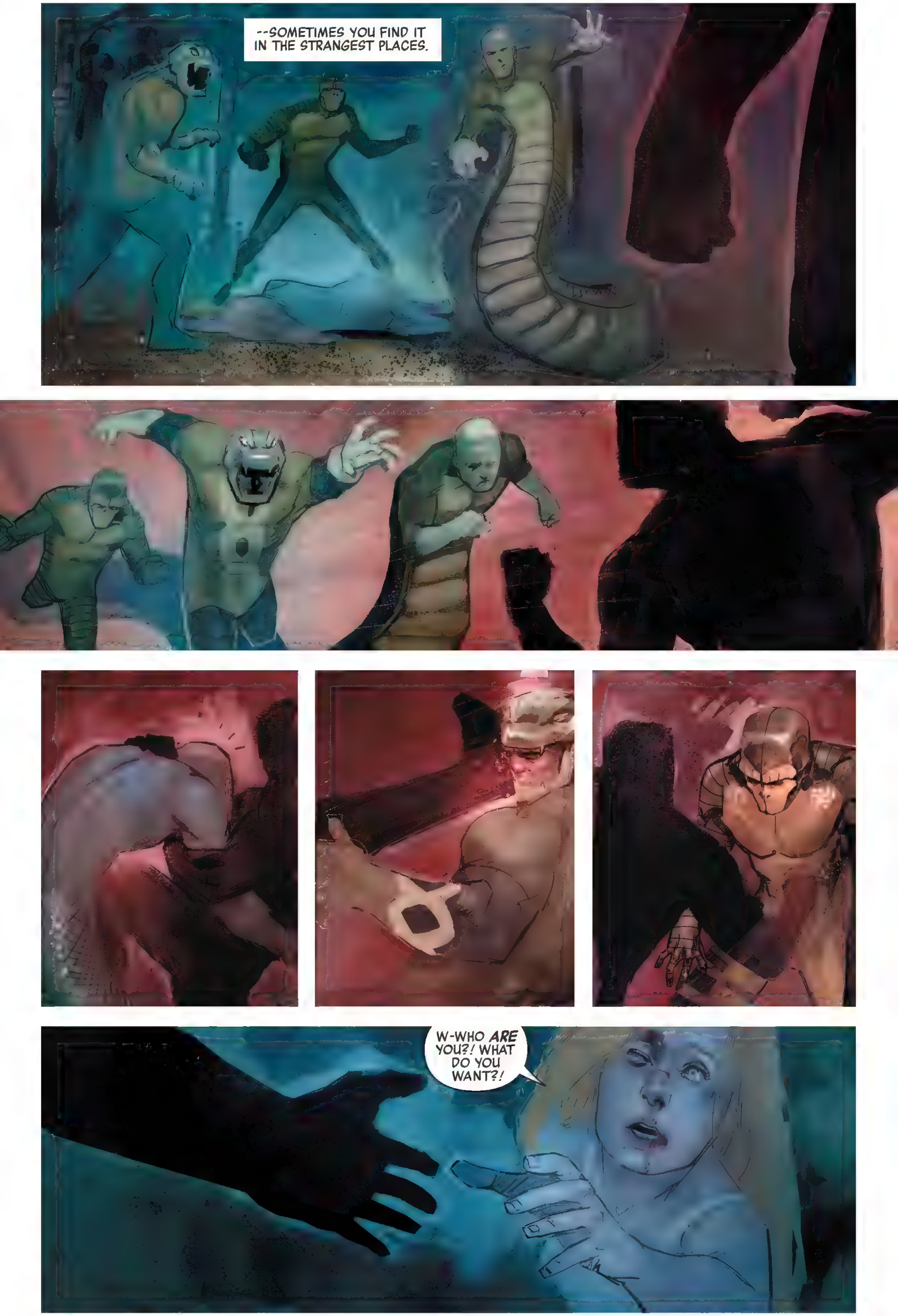

OKAY. JUST MEANS WE HAVE TO WORK FASTER.
DOES THAT MEAN YOU GOT SOMETHING? YOU FOUND A WAY TO TRACK THE CUBE FRAGMENTS?
OF COURSE I DID, LOOK WHO YOU'RE ASKING.
AND NOT ONLY THAT, BUT I PUT THE CALL OUT TO FIND OUT WHO WAS UP FOR BRINGING THEM HOME.
MEET OUR VOLUNTEERS.
HOW COULD HERCULES REFUSE A QUEST?! A GRAND AND GLORIOUS QUEST, LIKE IN THE OLD AGES! MY FRIENDS, THIS WILL BE MAGNIFICENT!
OR A SUICIDE MISSION. ALSO THAT.
IF THAT IS WHAT IS NECESSARY TO RESCUE MY SISTER, ANT-MAN, THEN SO BE IT.
AND YES, I'LL BE BABYSITTING. YOU'RE WELCOME.
GOOD TEAM, RIGHT?
IT'S A START. BUT I'M ASSUMING SELVIG PROBABLY WASN'T DUMB ENOUGH TO SCATTER THE FRAGMENTS IN HYDRA TERRITORY--
--WHICH MEANS WE'RE GONNA NEED TO GET OUT OF THE COUNTRY.
UH-- HEY, FELLAS? IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR SOME HELP ON THAT FRONT--
--I MIGHT KNOW A GUY.

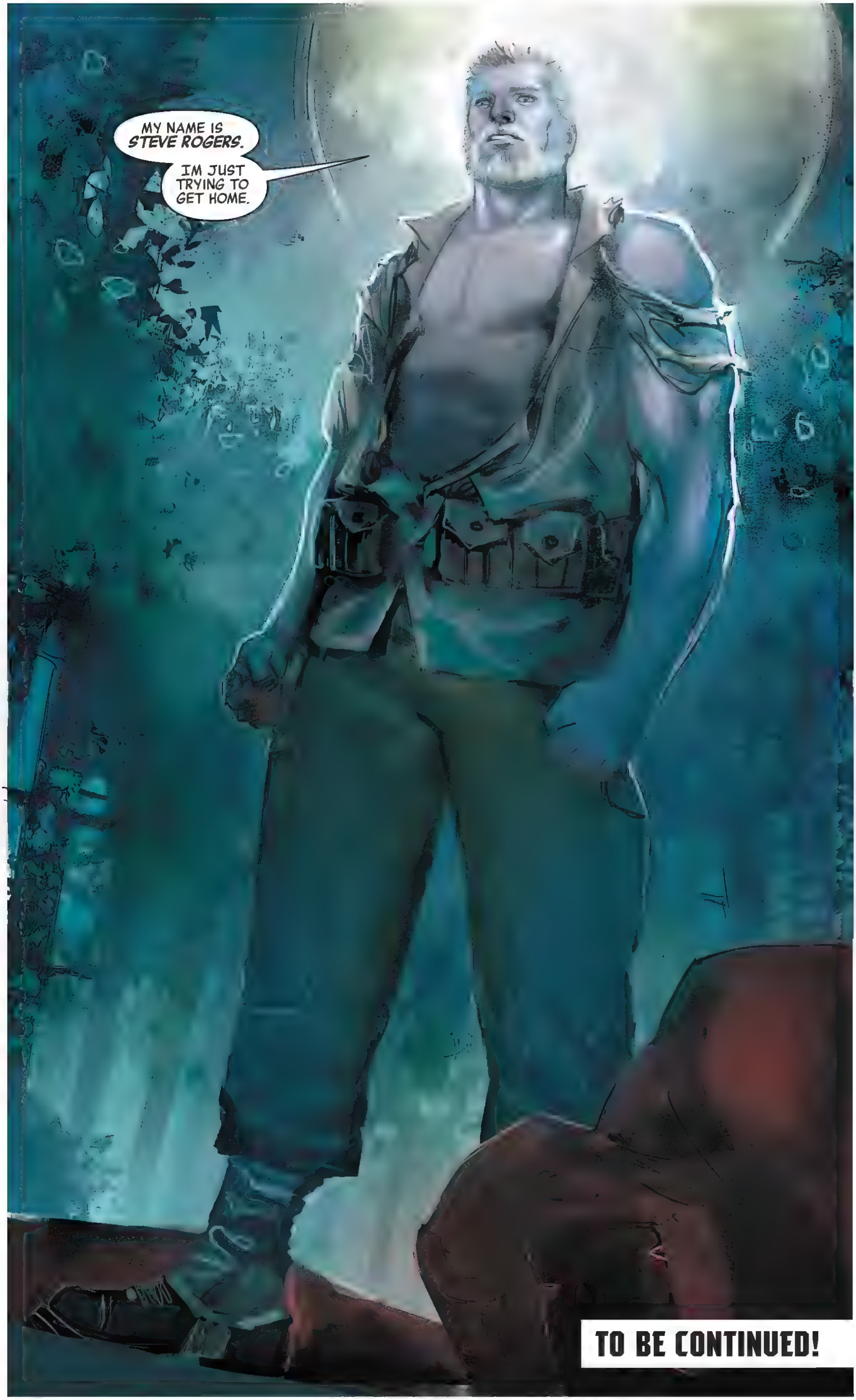

24 HOURS LATER.
COLORADO.
THAT'S THE PROBLEM WITH THESE OLD HOUSES--
--CRAWLING WITH SPIDERS.
UH, YOUR CODENAME IS *BLACK WIDOW.*
I DIDN'T GET TO PICK IT. WHY ARE YOU HERE, SPIDER-MAN? TO STOP ME?
NO. I DON'T HAVE TO--
--I ALREADY KNOW YOU WON'T DO IT.
OH? IS THAT A FACT?
YEAH, ACTUALLY, IT IS. THERE WAS A VISION OF THE FUTURE, REMEMBER? EVERYBODY SAW IT--
"--*I'M* THE ONE WHO KILLS CAPTAIN AMERICA."
AH...SO YOU'RE NOT HERE TO CAPTURE ME--YOU THINK YOU'RE HERE TO *HELP* ME.
ALL I KNOW IS I'M TIRED OF TRYING TO RUN AWAY FROM THIS. WHATEVER IS GONNA HAPPEN, LET'S JUST GET IT OVER WITH.
I SEE.


NO.
"NO"? WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "NO"?
IT MEANS WHAT IT ALWAYS MEANS.
I DON'T NEED A SIDEKICK.
WHAT IF THERE IS MORE THAN ONE?
YOU DID SAY YOU NEEDED A TEAM.
HH. THE LITTLE REVOLUTIONARIES.
AND YOU--ALL OF YOU--YOU'RE WILLING TO GET BLOOD ON YOUR HANDS NOW?
NOBODY IS SAYING ANYTHING ABOUT KILLING ANYONE. BUT WHERE SPIDEY GOES--
--WE ALL GO.
TO THE END, HOMIE.
VERY WELL THEN, CHILDREN--
--WELCOME TO THE RED ROOM.


MONTANA.
SCOTT, THIS PLACE--
YEAH, I KNOW. A REAL "YOU WILL NEVER FIND A MORE WRETCHED HIVE OF SCUM AND VILLAINY" VIBE TO IT. BUT, ON THE *PLUS* SIDE--DOLLAR DRAFTS.
THESE PEOPLE ARE FILTHY AND *UNSHAVEN.* HOW COULD THEY POSSIBLY BE OF USE TO US?
HEY, THEY MAY NOT *LOOK* LIKE MUCH, PIETRO, BUT THIS IS ACTUALLY THE HUB FOR UNDERGROUND ACTIVITY ON THE NORTHERN BORDER.
THESE ARE THE FELLAS YOU GO TO WHEN YOU NEED WEAPONS OR CREDENTIALS, NO QUESTIONS ASKED, OR WHEN YOU NEED SOMETHING SMUGGLED OUT OF THE COUNTRY--
--YOU KNOW, LIKE *US.*
A *LOT* OF PEOPLE MAKE THAT PROMISE, SCOTT. BUT BORDER SECURITY BEING WHAT IT IS NOW, YOU REALLY THINK YOUR CONTACT CAN PULL IT OFF?
HE'S MORE THAN A CONTACT, TONY. WHEN I NEEDED TO GET MY DAUGHTER CASSIE OUT OF THE COUNTRY, HE CAME THROUGH *BIG*-TIME. HE KNOWS WHAT HE'S DOING, TRUST ME.
AND YOU'RE SURE WE CAN TRUST *HIM?*
PRETTY SURE--
--I MEAN, HE DID USED TO BE *CAPTAIN AMERICA,* AFTER ALL.
HEY, SAM.
AW, NO--
--WHAT THE HELL DO *YOU* PEOPLE WANT?!
THEY SAID THEY WERE LOOKING FOR ESCAPE, BUT THE TRUTH IS, THEY WERE STILL SEARCHING FOR THE SAME THING...


HOPE.
A REASON TO KEEP BELIEVING.
TO KEEP FIGHTING.
MAYBE IT WAS JUST LIKE RICK JONES HAD SAID-- THAT THEY CAN NEVER TAKE IT FROM YOU, YOU CAN ONLY LOSE IT--
--BUT EITHER WAY, IT HAD FELT SO FAR GONE, FOR SO LONG.
SO DEEPLY BURIED UNDER THE GUILT AND THE REGRET AND THE PAIN.
UNDER THE *FEAR.*
WE HAD SEARCHED THE WORLD AROUND US.
WE HAD SEARCHED INSIDE *OURSELVES--*
--AND STILL WE CAME UP EMPTY. SO OFTEN AND SO COMPLETELY WE NEARLY GAVE UP.
BUT THAT'S THE THING ABOUT HOPE. JUST WHEN YOU'RE AT YOUR END--

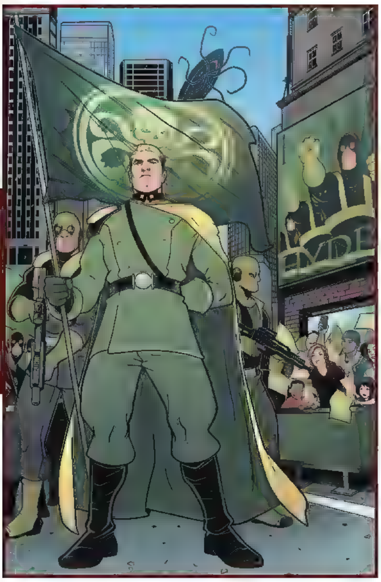

--SOMETIMES YOU FIND IT IN THE STRANGEST PLACES.
W-WHO *ARE* YOU?! WHAT DO YOU WANT?!


MY NAME IS *STEVE ROGERS.*
IM JUST TRYING TO GET HOME.
TO BE CONTINUED!

# SECRET EMPIRE

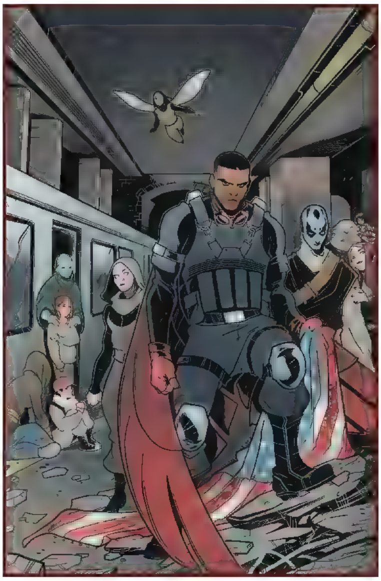
## MAY

### CAPTAIN AMERICA: STEVE ROGERS #17



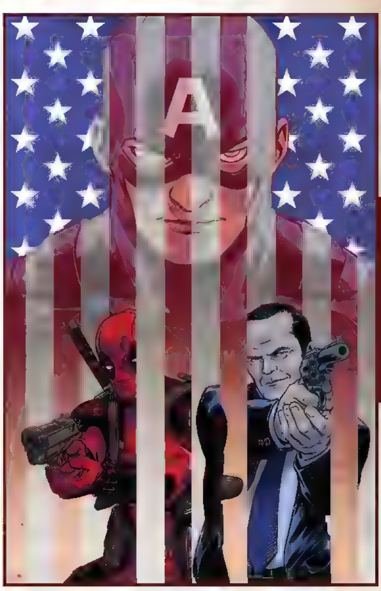
IN CAP WE TRUST!

### CAPTAIN AMERICA: SAM WILSON #22



SAM WILSON
FLIES AGAIN!

### DEADPOOL #31



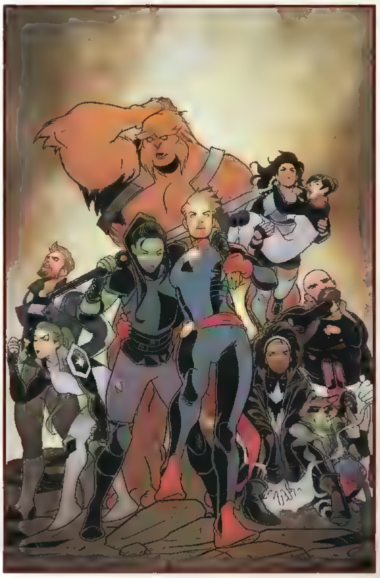
STEVE ROGERS' RED RIGHT
HAND HAS A JOB TO DO...

## BEYOND THE SHIELD

### ULTIMATES$^2$ #7

WILL GALACTUS HELP THE
STRANDED HEROES?

### THE MIGHTY CAPTAIN MARVEL #5



OUTNUMBERED & OUTGUNNED,
CAPTAIN MARVEL FIGHTS
TO KEEP HOPE ALIVE!

# SECRET EMPIRE

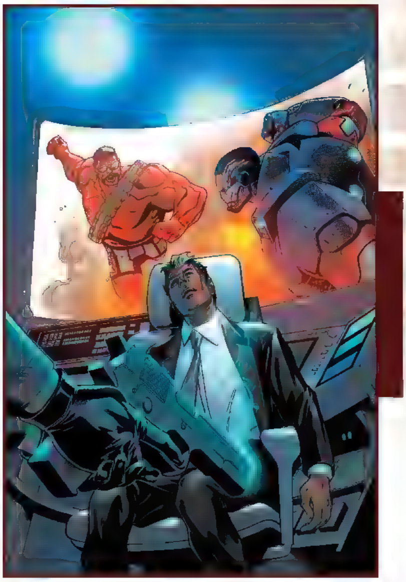
## MAY

### SECRET WARRIORS #1

### SECRET WARRIORS #2

QUAKE ASSEMBLES THE NEXT GENERATION OF INHUMANS TO TAKE ON STEVE ROGERS!

### U.S.AVENGERS #6



CAP WANTS S.H.I.E.L.D.--AND ROBERTO DA COSTA IS IN HIS WAY.

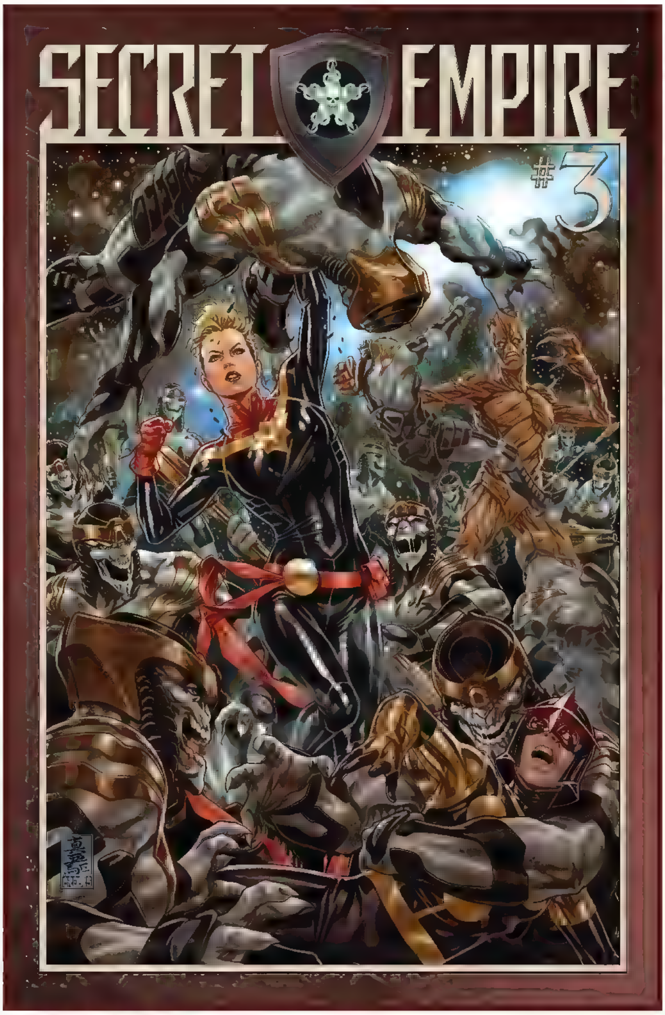
## DARKFORCE NEW YORK

### DOCTOR STRANGE #21

CAN THE SORCERER SUPREME PROTECT A CITY BESIEGED BY DARK FORCES?

# SECRET EMPIRE

## NEXT



UNDER CONSTANT ATTACK FROM WAVE AFTER WAVE OF INVADING CHITAURI ALIENS, CAPTAIN MARVEL AND THE DEEP-SPACE TASK FORCE UNDER HER COMMAND ARE WAGING A WAR OF ATTRITION--ONE THEY MAY NOT BE ABLE TO SURVIVE!

### SECRET EMPIRE: UPRISING #1

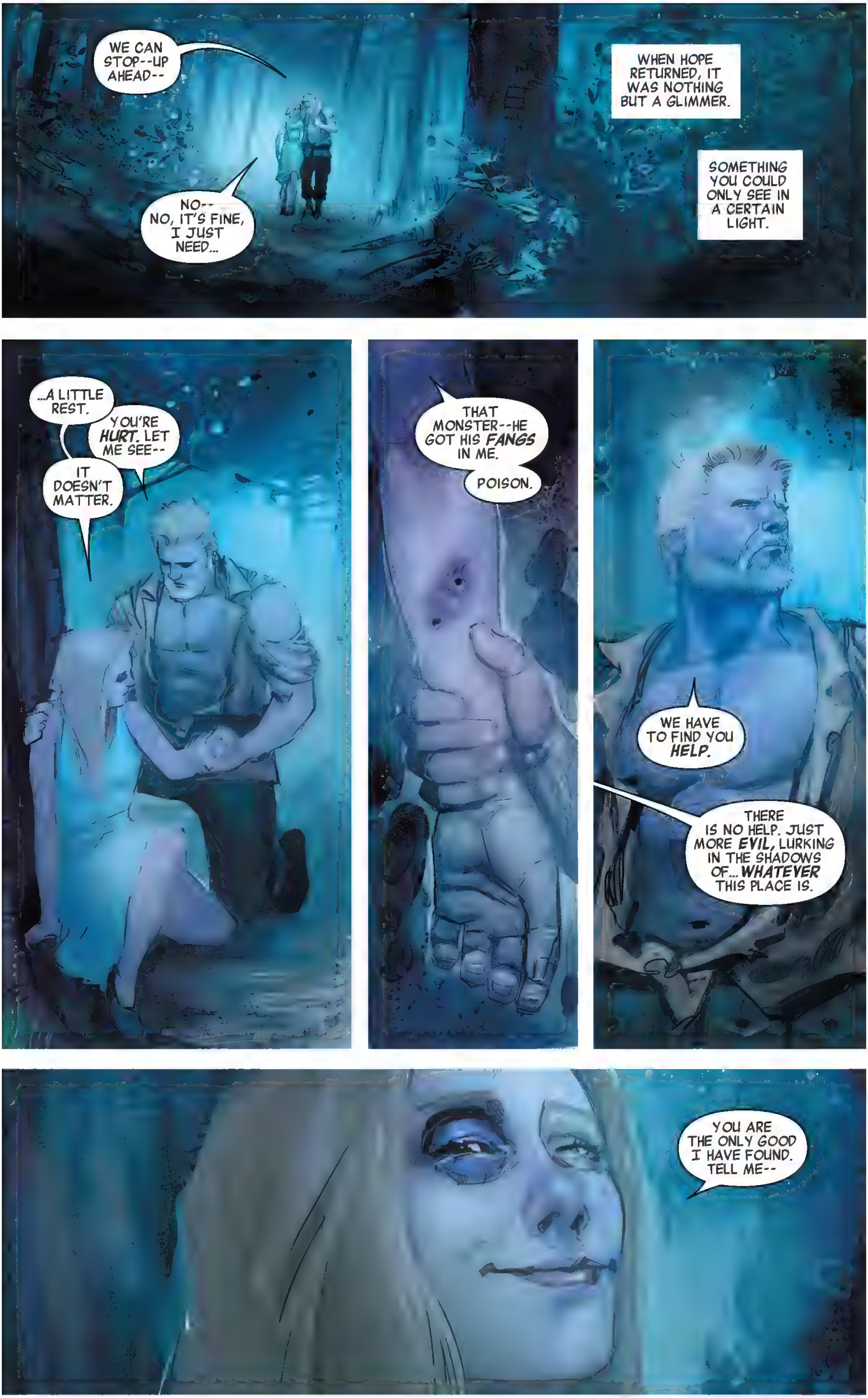
BLACK WIDOW LEADS THE NEXT GENERATION OF HEROES ON A MISSION THAT WILL CHALLENGE EVERYTHING THEY BELIEVE IN. WELCOME TO THE NEW RED ROOM.

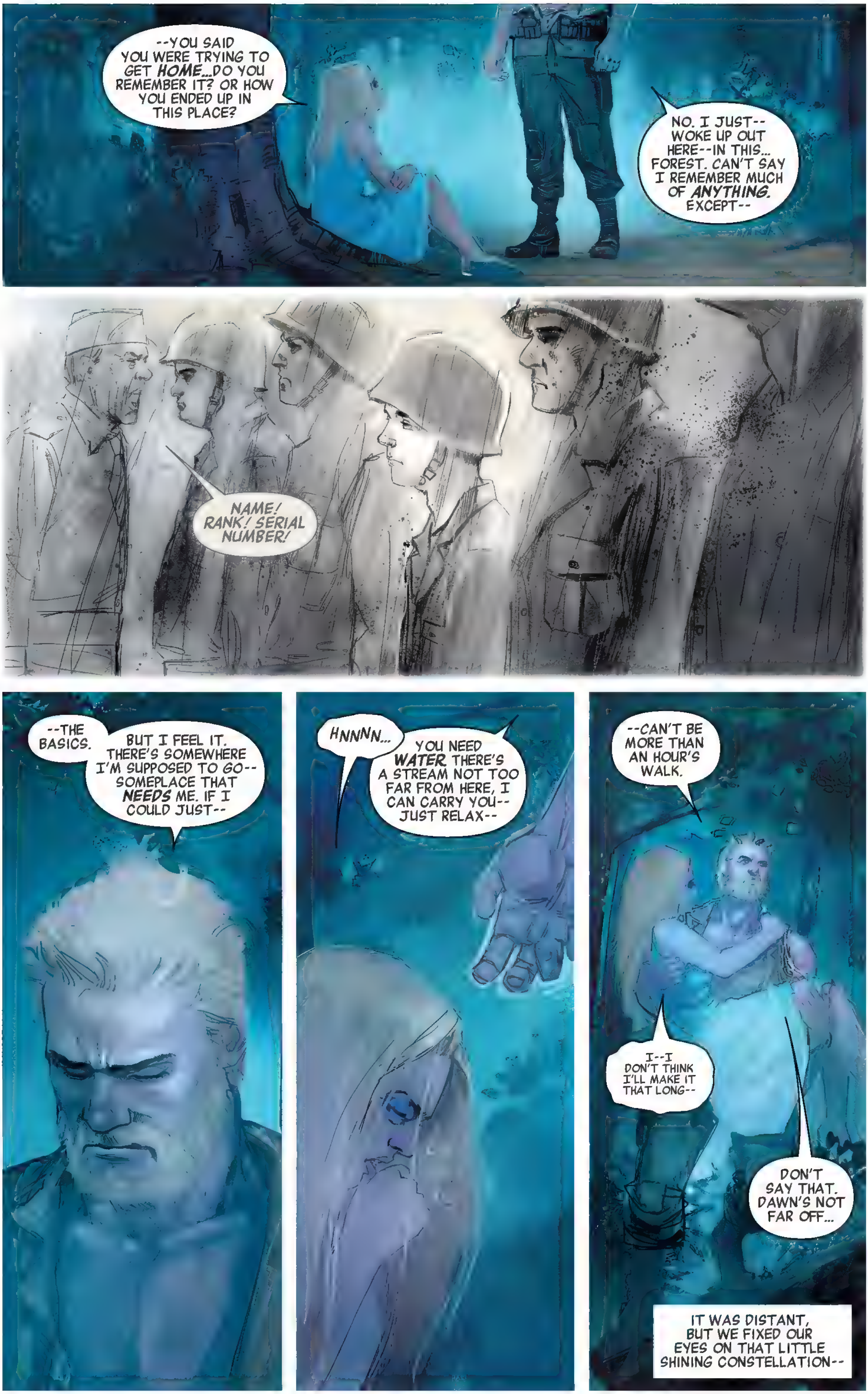
# SECRET EMPIRE

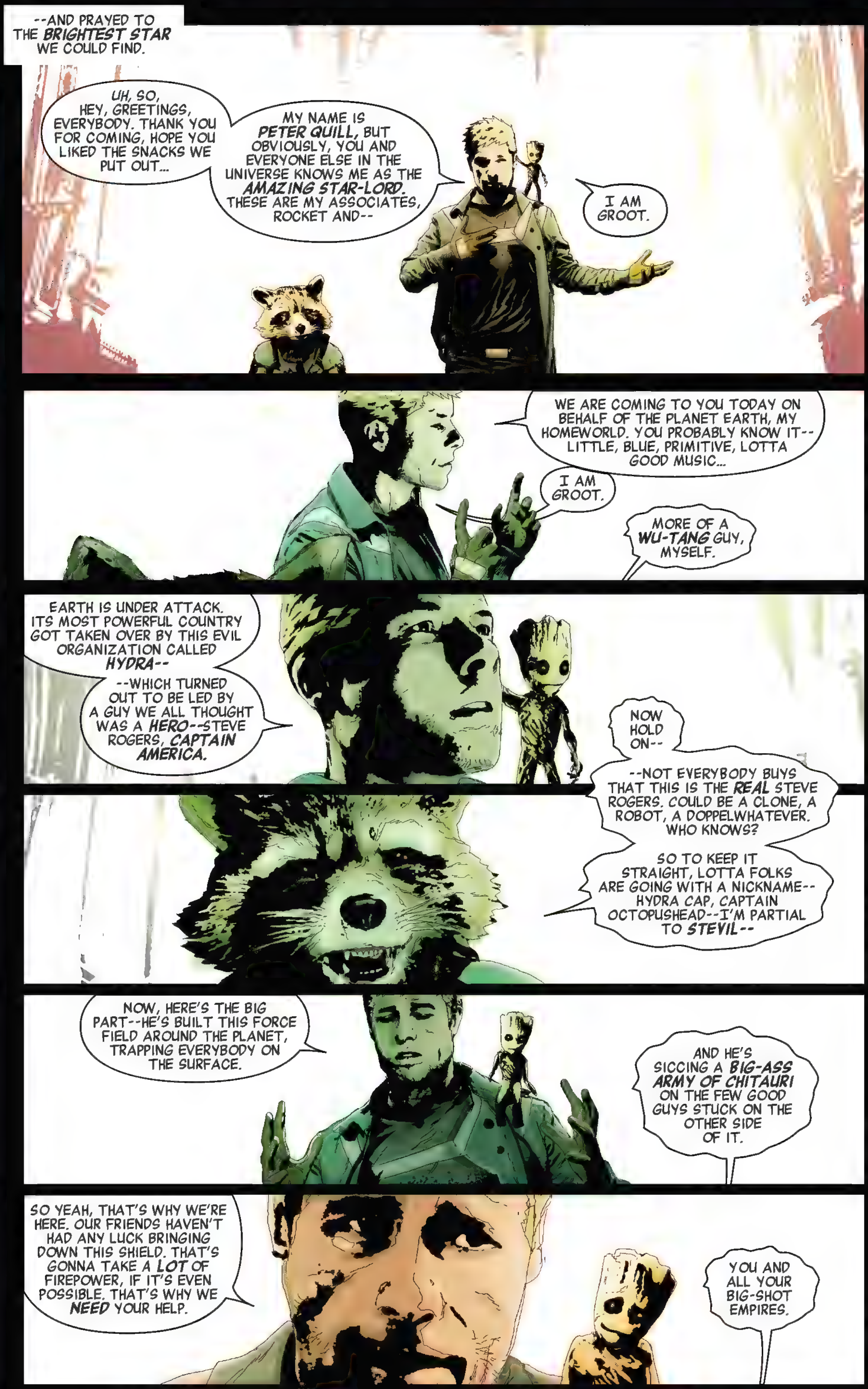
MARVEL

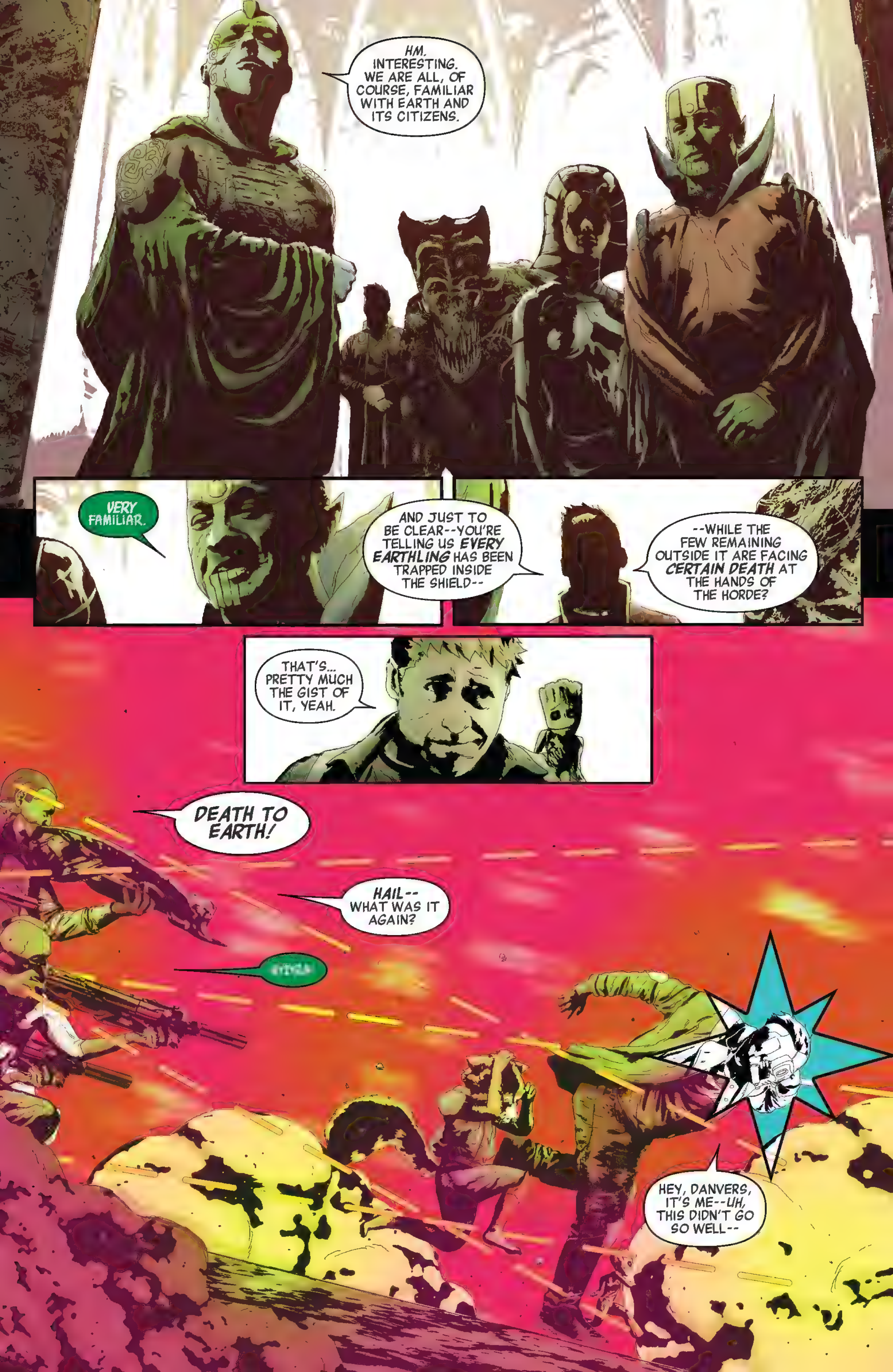
#3

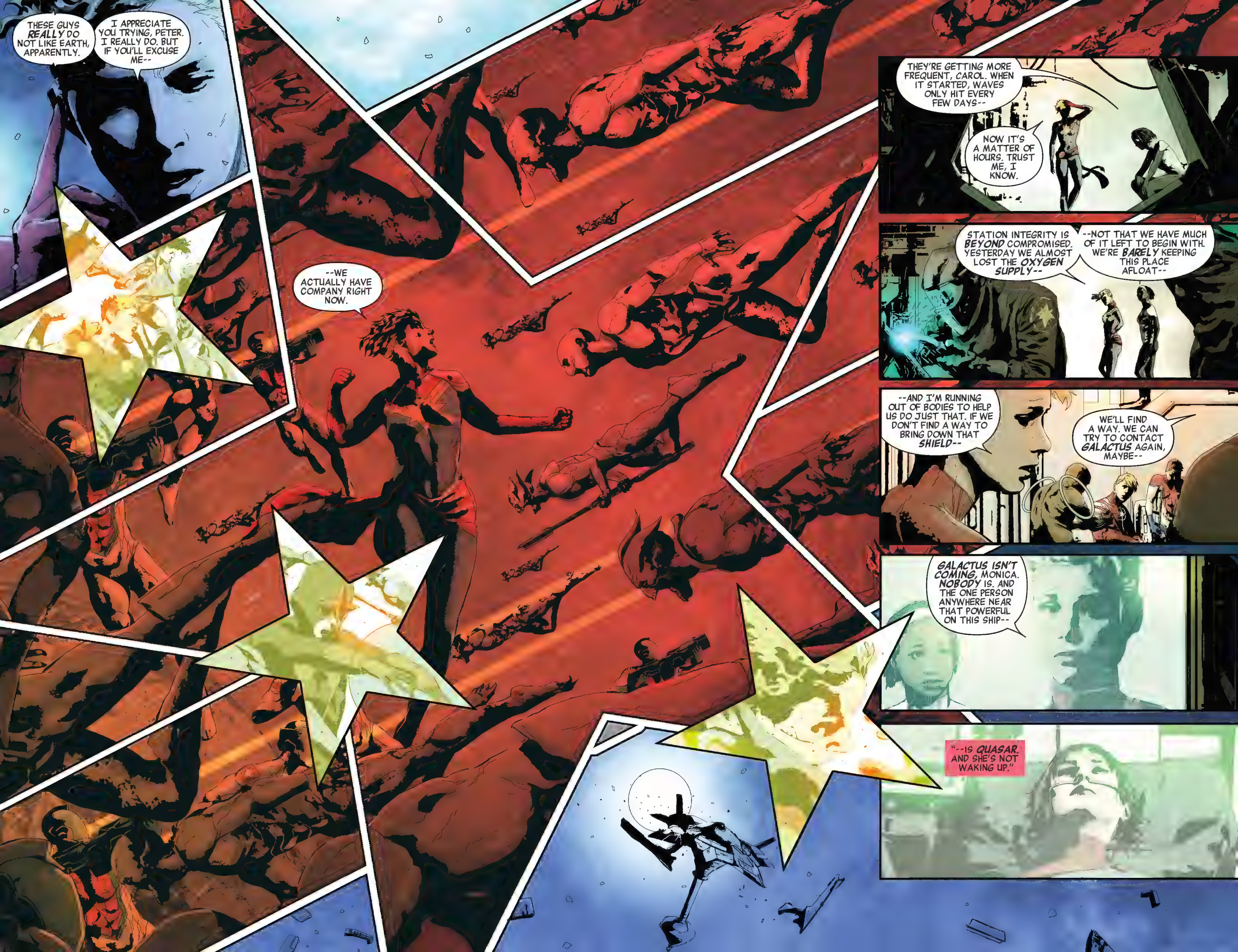
NICK SPENCER • ANDREA SORRENTINO • ROD REIS


WE CAN STOP--UP AHEAD--
WHEN HOPE RETURNED, IT WAS NOTHING BUT A GLIMMER.
SOMETHING YOU COULD ONLY SEE IN A CERTAIN LIGHT.
NO-- NO, IT'S FINE, I JUST NEED...
...A LITTLE REST.
YOU'RE HURT. LET ME SEE--
IT DOESN'T MATTER.
THAT MONSTER--HE GOT HIS FANGS IN ME.
POISON.
WE HAVE TO FIND YOU HELP.
THERE IS NO HELP. JUST MORE EVIL, LURKING IN THE SHADOWS OF... WHATEVER THIS PLACE IS.
YOU ARE THE ONLY GOOD I HAVE FOUND. TELL ME--


--YOU SAID YOU WERE TRYING TO GET HOME...DO YOU REMEMBER IT? OR HOW YOU ENDED UP IN THIS PLACE?
NO. I JUST--WOKE UP OUT HERE--IN THIS... FOREST. CAN'T SAY I REMEMBER MUCH OF ANYTHING. EXCEPT--
NAME! RANK! SERIAL NUMBER!
--THE BASICS.
BUT I FEEL IT. THERE'S SOMEWHERE I'M SUPPOSED TO GO--SOMEPLACE THAT NEEDS ME. IF I COULD JUST--
HNNNN...
YOU NEED WATER. THERE'S A STREAM NOT TOO FAR FROM HERE, I CAN CARRY YOU--JUST RELAX--
--CAN'T BE MORE THAN AN HOUR'S WALK.
I--I DON'T THINK I'LL MAKE IT THAT LONG--
DON'T SAY THAT. DAWN'S NOT FAR OFF...
IT WAS DISTANT, BUT WE FIXED OUR EYES ON THAT LITTLE SHINING CONSTELLATION--


--AND PRAYED TO THE **BRIGHTEST STAR** WE COULD FIND.
UH, SO, HEY, GREETINGS, EVERYBODY. THANK YOU FOR COMING, HOPE YOU LIKED THE SNACKS WE PUT OUT...
MY NAME IS **PETER QUILL**, BUT OBVIOUSLY, YOU AND EVERYONE ELSE IN THE UNIVERSE KNOWS ME AS THE **AMAZING STAR-LORD.** THESE ARE MY ASSOCIATES, ROCKET AND--
I AM GROOT.
WE ARE COMING TO YOU TODAY ON BEHALF OF THE PLANET EARTH, MY HOMEWORLD. YOU PROBABLY KNOW IT--LITTLE, BLUE, PRIMITIVE, LOTTA GOOD MUSIC...
I AM GROOT.
MORE OF A **WU-TANG** GUY, MYSELF.
EARTH IS UNDER ATTACK. ITS MOST POWERFUL COUNTRY GOT TAKEN OVER BY THIS EVIL ORGANIZATION CALLED **HYDRA--**
--WHICH TURNED OUT TO BE LED BY A GUY WE ALL THOUGHT WAS A **HERO**--STEVE ROGERS, **CAPTAIN AMERICA.**
NOW HOLD ON--
--NOT EVERYBODY BUYS THAT THIS IS THE **REAL** STEVE ROGERS. COULD BE A CLONE, A ROBOT, A DOPPELWHATEVER. WHO KNOWS?
SO TO KEEP IT STRAIGHT, LOTTA FOLKS ARE GOING WITH A NICKNAME--HYDRA CAP, CAPTAIN OCTOPUSHEAD--I'M PARTIAL TO **STEVIL--**
NOW, HERE'S THE BIG PART--HE'S BUILT THIS FORCE FIELD AROUND THE PLANET, TRAPPING EVERYBODY ON THE SURFACE.
AND HE'S SICCING A **BIG-ASS ARMY OF CHITAURI** ON THE FEW GOOD GUYS STUCK ON THE OTHER SIDE OF IT.
SO YEAH, THAT'S WHY WE'RE HERE. OUR FRIENDS HAVEN'T HAD ANY LUCK BRINGING DOWN THIS SHIELD. THAT'S GONNA TAKE A **LOT** OF FIREPOWER, IF IT'S EVEN POSSIBLE. THAT'S WHY WE **NEED** YOUR HELP.
YOU AND ALL YOUR BIG-SHOT EMPIRES.


HM. INTERESTING. WE ARE ALL, OF COURSE, FAMILIAR WITH EARTH AND ITS CITIZENS.
VERY FAMILIAR.
AND JUST TO BE CLEAR--YOU'RE TELLING US *EVERY EARTHLING* HAS BEEN TRAPPED INSIDE THE SHIELD--
--WHILE THE FEW REMAINING OUTSIDE IT ARE FACING *CERTAIN DEATH* AT THE HANDS OF THE HORDE?
THAT'S... PRETTY MUCH THE GIST OF IT, YEAH.
*DEATH TO EARTH!*
*HAIL--* WHAT WAS IT AGAIN?
HEY, DANVERS, IT'S ME--*UH,* THIS DIDN'T GO SO WELL--


THESE GUYS *REALLY* DO NOT LIKE EARTH, APPARENTLY.
I APPRECIATE YOU TRYING, PETER. I REALLY DO. BUT IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME--
--WE ACTUALLY HAVE COMPANY RIGHT NOW.
THEY'RE GETTING MORE FREQUENT, CAROL. WHEN IT STARTED, WAVES ONLY HIT EVERY FEW DAYS--
NOW IT'S A MATTER OF HOURS. TRUST ME, I KNOW.
STATION INTEGRITY IS *BEYOND* COMPROMISED. YESTERDAY WE ALMOST LOST THE *OXYGEN SUPPLY*--
--NOT THAT WE HAVE MUCH OF IT LEFT TO BEGIN WITH. WE'RE *BARELY* KEEPING THIS PLACE AFLOAT--
--AND I'M RUNNING OUT OF BODIES TO HELP US DO JUST THAT. IF WE DON'T FIND A WAY TO BRING DOWN THAT *SHIELD*--
WE'LL FIND A WAY. WE CAN TRY TO CONTACT *GALACTUS* AGAIN, MAYBE--
*GALACTUS ISN'T COMING,* MONICA. *NOBODY* IS. AND THE ONE PERSON ANYWHERE NEAR THAT POWERFUL ON THIS SHIP--
"--IS *QUASAR.* AND SHE'S NOT WAKING UP."

# SECRET EMPIRE

Steve Rogers, A.K.A. Captain America, has claimed the United States for Hydra. Under his ruthless new regime, Inhumans are closely monitored, and many have been imprisoned in camps across the country. Earth's most powerful heroes are stranded beyond Earth's Planetary Defense Shield, at the mercy of a Chitauri Invasion--or trapped inside the Darkforce bubble that envelops New York City.

The handful of heroes remaining discovered that a Cosmic Cube was behind Steve Rogers' sinister change of heart, and might be able to change him back--if the scattered pieces can be reunited. But to find the Cube shards, they'd have to leave the country--and Sam Wilson, who abandoned the mantle of Captain America, isn't interested in helping them cross the border. Meanwhile, Black Widow and a group of younger heroes are seeking a less idealistic way to end Steve Rogers' rule...

WRITER ▪ NICK SPENCER
ARTISTS ▪ ANDREA SORRENTINO WITH ROD REIS
LETTERER ▪ VC'S TRAVIS LANHAM
RECAP PAGE ART ▪ ANDREA SORRENTINO
COVER ▪ MARK BROOKS
VARIANT COVERS ▪ JOHN TYLER CHRISTOPHER; DAN MORA & EDGAR DELGADO; ANDREA SORRENTINO

PRODUCTION DESIGN ▪ CARLOS LAO
ASSISTANT EDITOR ▪ ALANNA SMITH
EDITOR ▪ TOM BREVOORT
EDITOR IN CHIEF ▪ AXEL ALONSO
CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER ▪ JOE QUESADA
PRESIDENT ▪ DAN BUCKLEY
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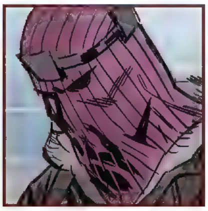
## HYDRA

HYDRA COMMAND

CAPTAIN AMERICA

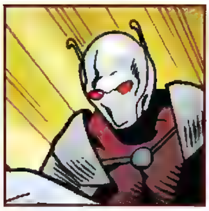

BARON ZEMO

KRAKEN

AVENGERS

SCARLET WITCH

SUPERIOR OCTOPUS


BLACK ANT

TASKMASTER

## AT LARGE

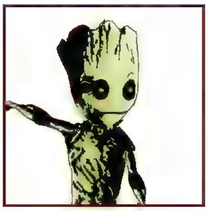
SAM WILSON

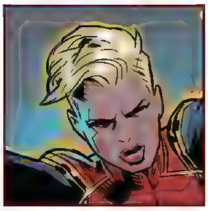
MARIA HILL

## BEYOND THE SHIELD

STAR-LORD

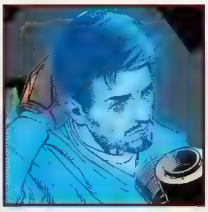
ROCKET RACCOON


GROOT


CAPTAIN MARVEL

SPECTRUM

## THE UNDERGROUND


TONY STARK (A.I.)

ANT-MAN

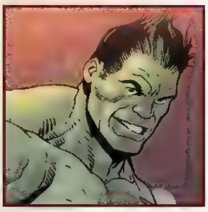
HERCULES

QUICKSILVER

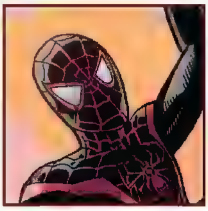
MOCKINGBIRD

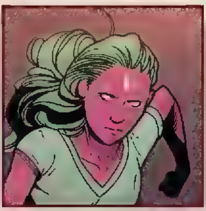
## THE RED ROOM

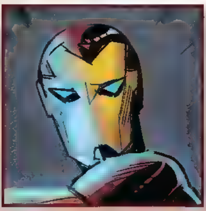
BLACK WIDOW

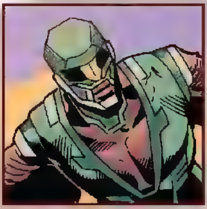

HULK (AMADEUS CHO)

WASP (NADIA PYM)


SPIDER-MAN

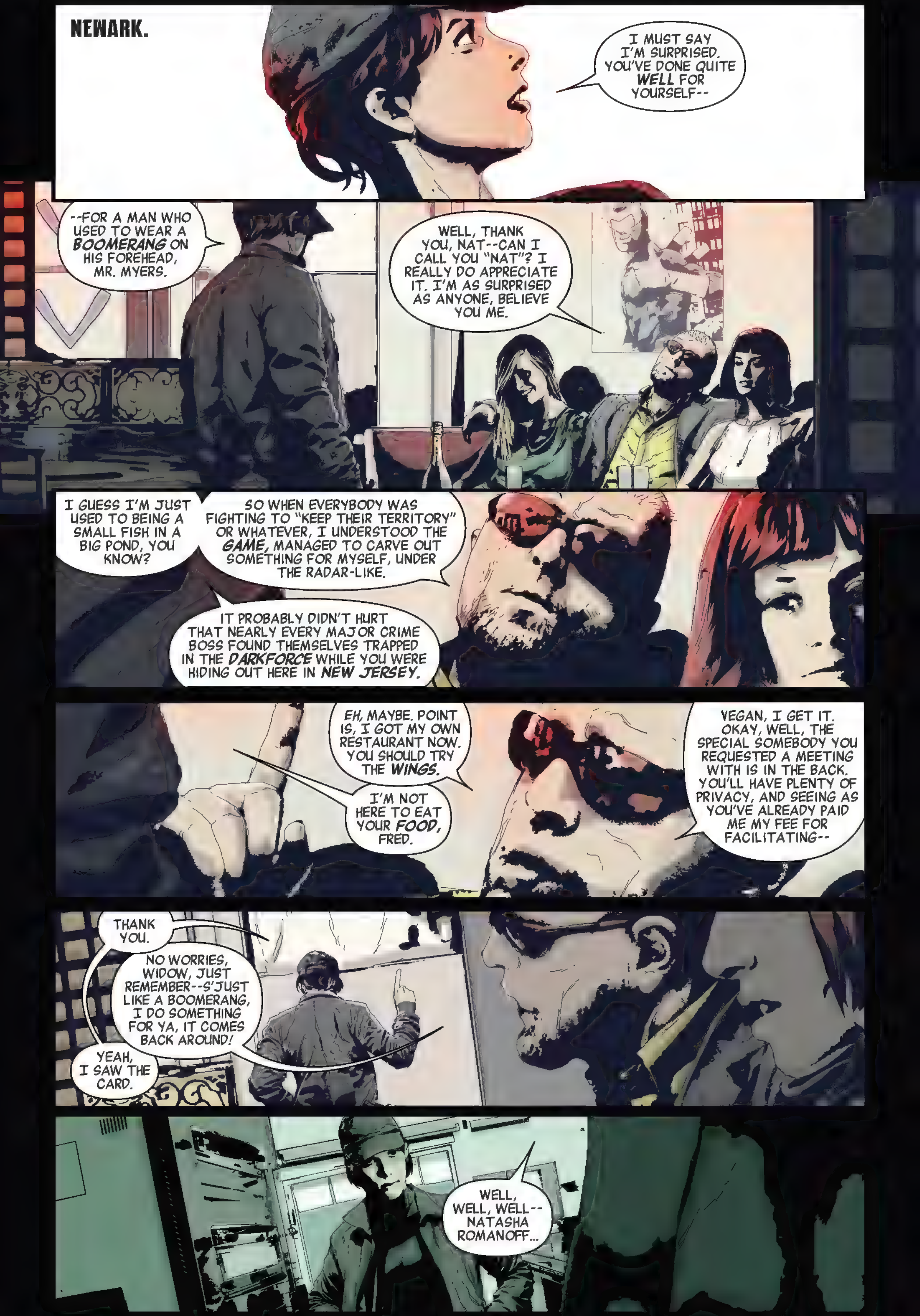

VIV VISION

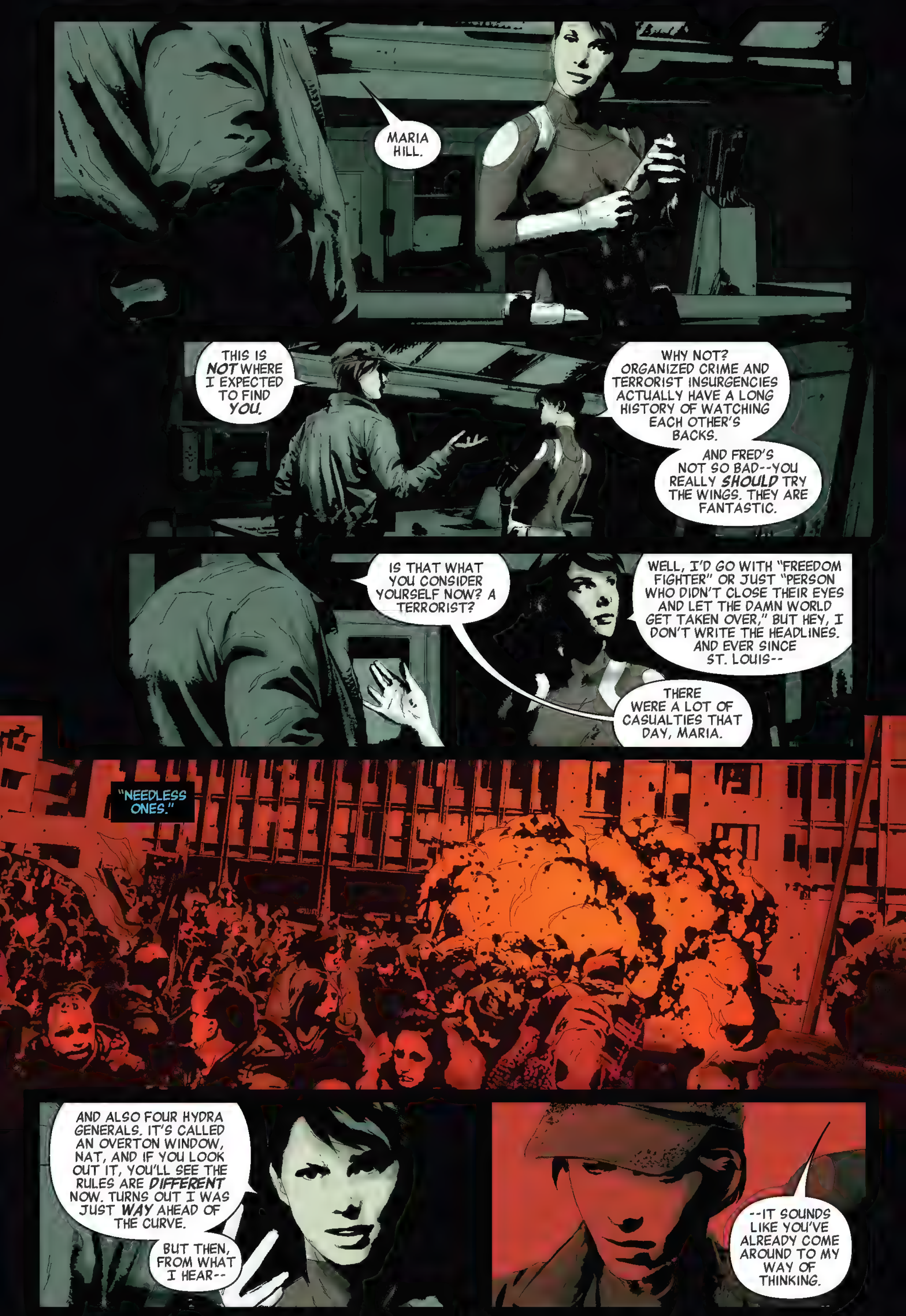

IRONHEART

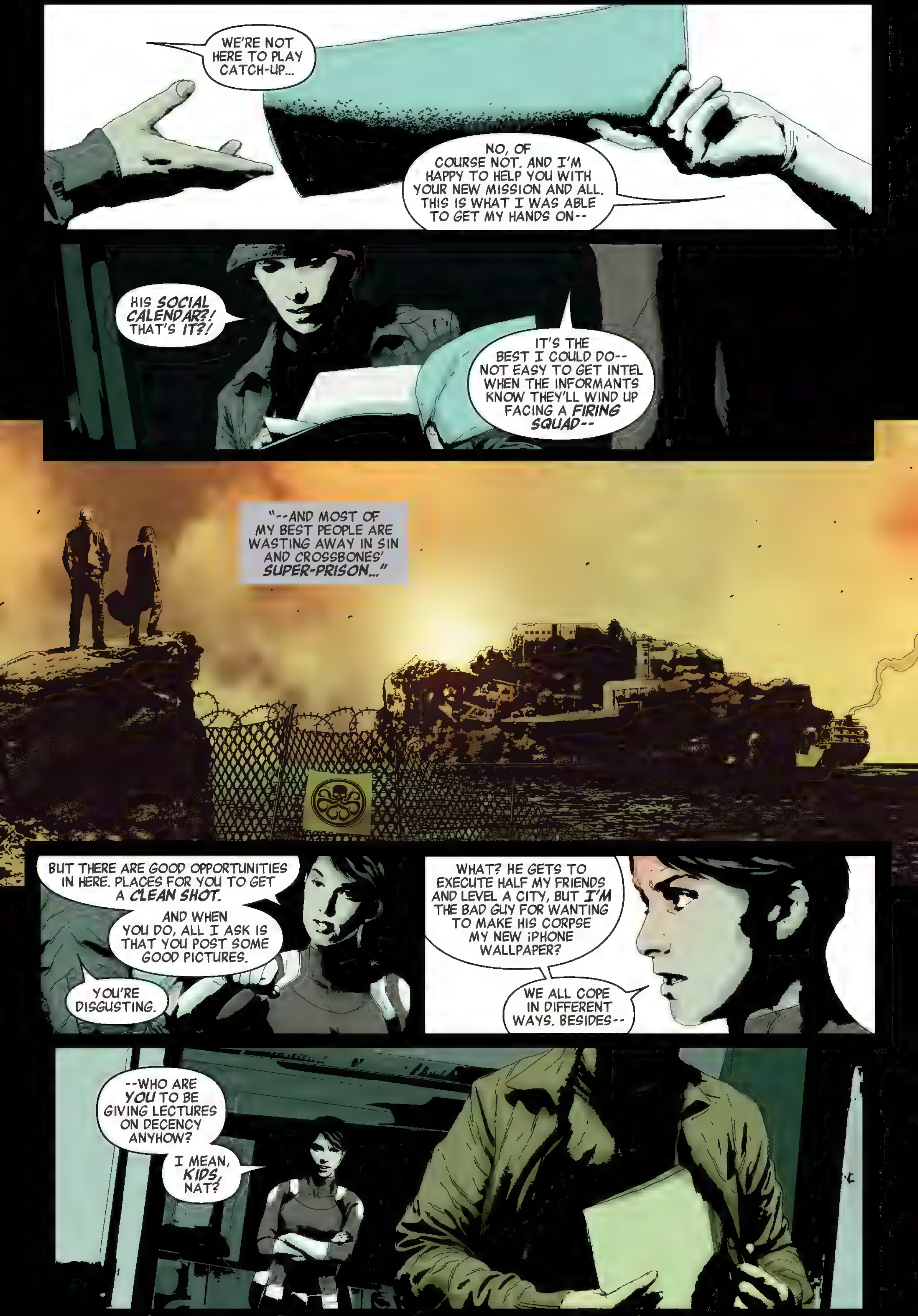

FALCON

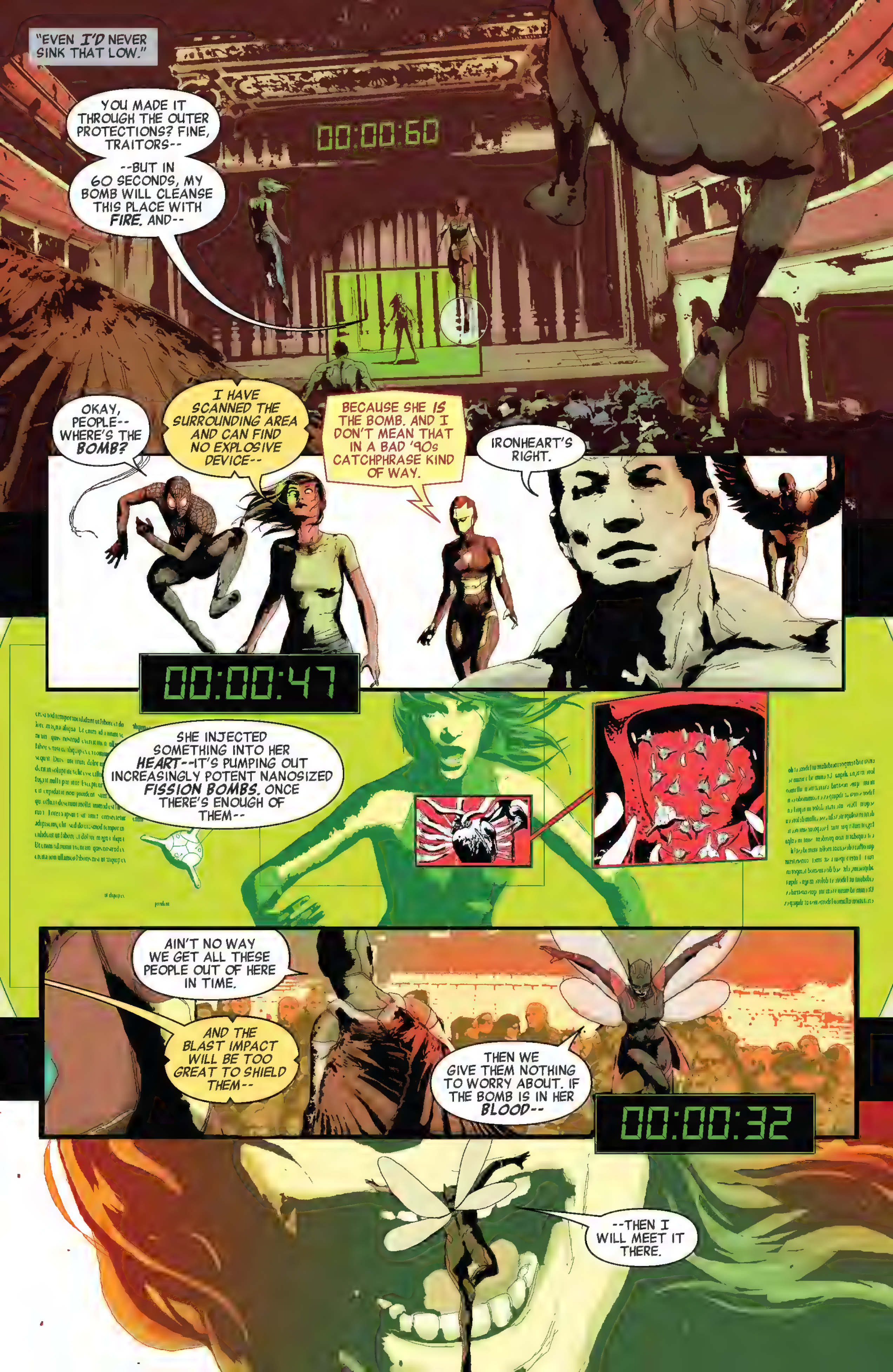
## CAPTURED

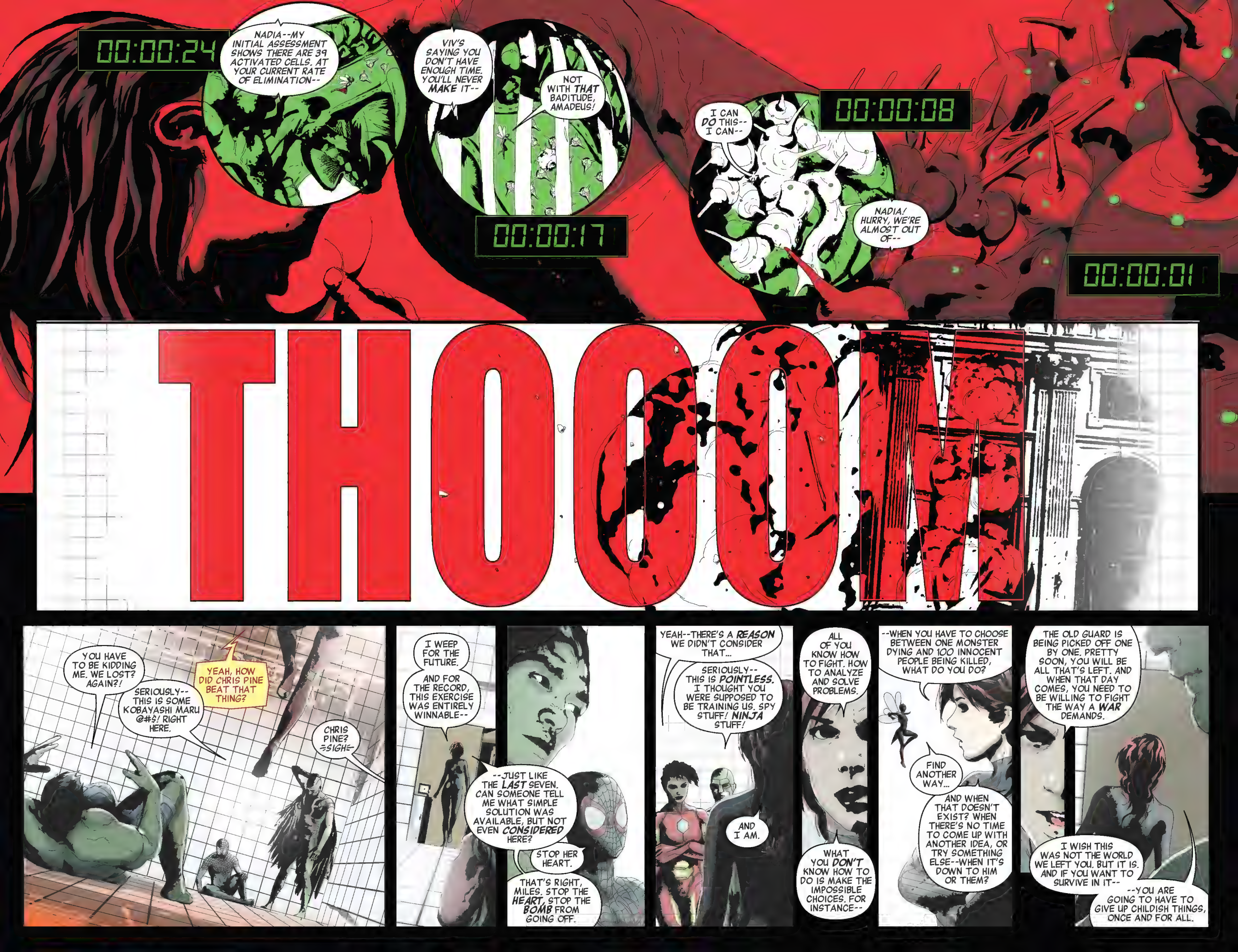
SHARON CARTER

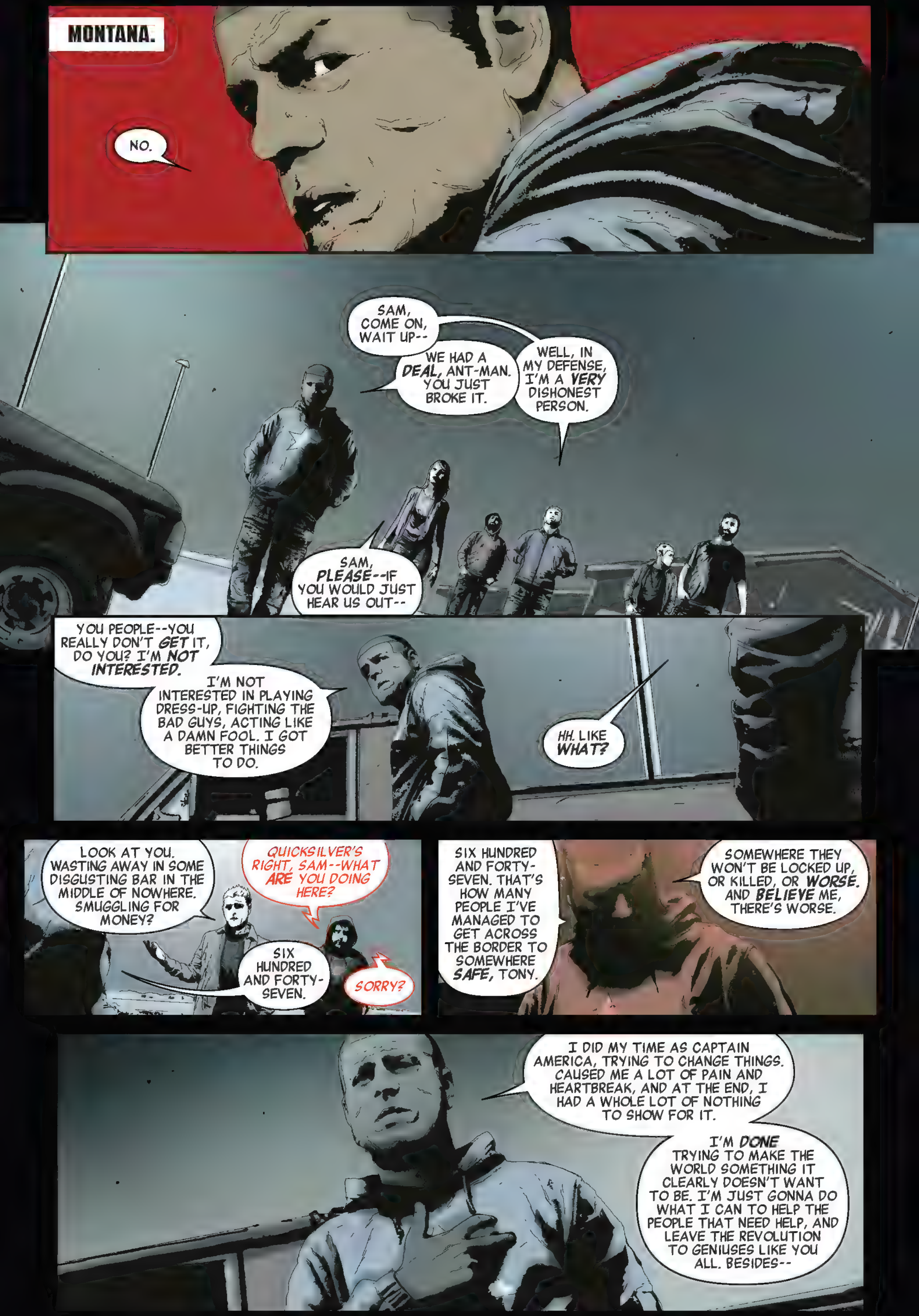

NEWARK.
I MUST SAY I'M SURPRISED. YOU'VE DONE QUITE *WELL* FOR YOURSELF--
--FOR A MAN WHO USED TO WEAR A *BOOMERANG* ON HIS FOREHEAD, MR. MYERS.
WELL, THANK YOU, NAT--CAN I CALL YOU "NAT"? I REALLY DO APPRECIATE IT. I'M AS SURPRISED AS ANYONE, BELIEVE YOU ME.
I GUESS I'M JUST USED TO BEING A SMALL FISH IN A BIG POND, YOU KNOW?
SO WHEN EVERYBODY WAS FIGHTING TO "KEEP THEIR TERRITORY" OR WHATEVER, I UNDERSTOOD THE *GAME*, MANAGED TO CARVE OUT SOMETHING FOR MYSELF, UNDER THE RADAR-LIKE.
IT PROBABLY DIDN'T HURT THAT NEARLY EVERY MAJOR CRIME BOSS FOUND THEMSELVES TRAPPED IN THE *DARKFORCE* WHILE YOU WERE HIDING OUT HERE IN *NEW JERSEY*.
EH, MAYBE. POINT IS, I GOT MY OWN RESTAURANT NOW. YOU SHOULD TRY THE *WINGS*.
I'M NOT HERE TO EAT YOUR *FOOD*, FRED.
VEGAN, I GET IT. OKAY, WELL, THE SPECIAL SOMEBODY YOU REQUESTED A MEETING WITH IS IN THE BACK. YOU'LL HAVE PLENTY OF PRIVACY, AND SEEING AS YOU'VE ALREADY PAID ME MY FEE FOR FACILITATING--
THANK YOU.
NO WORRIES, WIDOW, JUST REMEMBER--S'JUST LIKE A BOOMERANG, I DO SOMETHING FOR YA, IT COMES BACK AROUND!
YEAH, I SAW THE CARD.
WELL, WELL, WELL--NATASHA ROMANOFF...

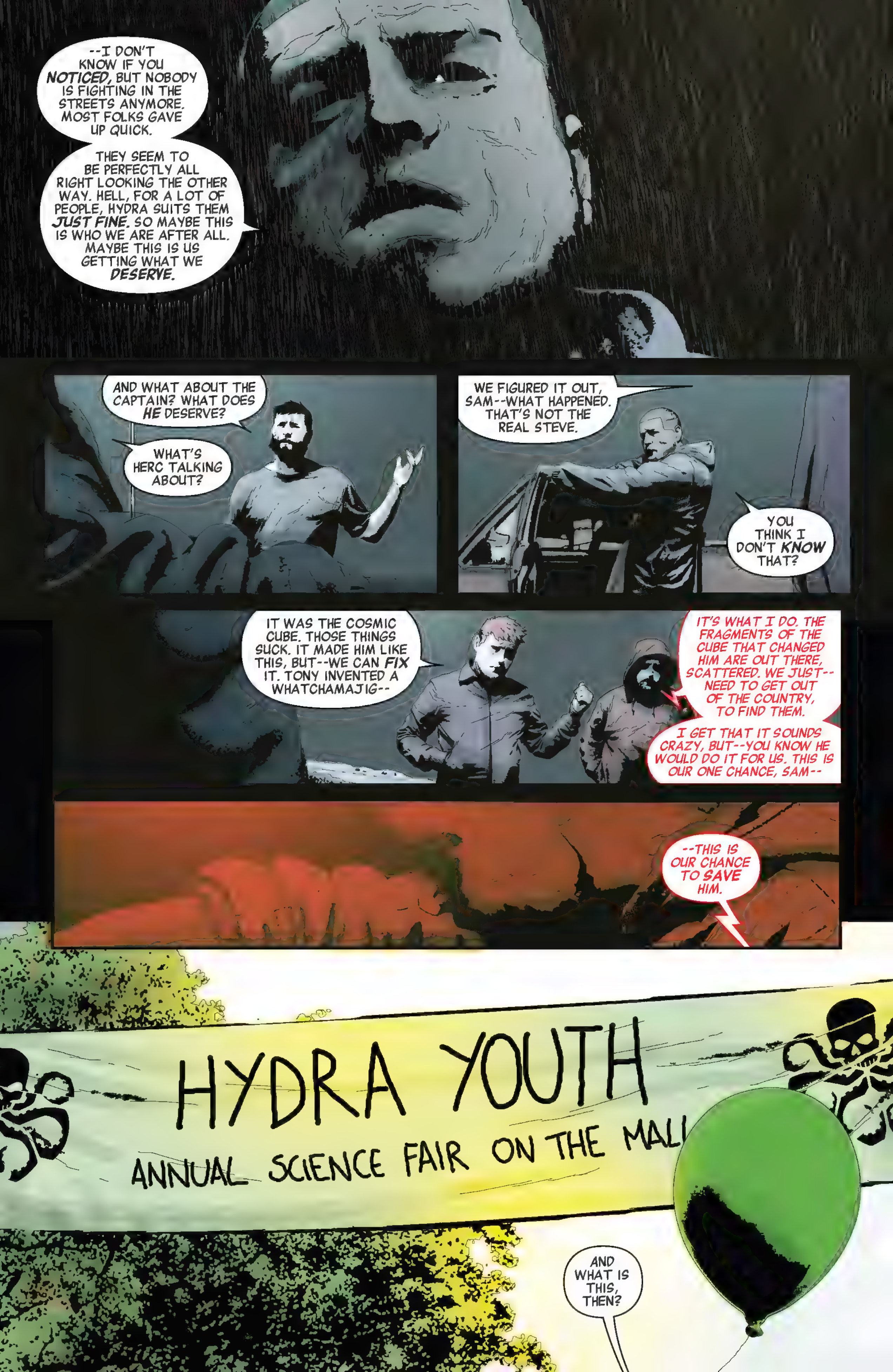

MARIA HILL.
THIS IS *NOT* WHERE I EXPECTED TO FIND *YOU.*
WHY NOT? ORGANIZED CRIME AND TERRORIST INSURGENCIES ACTUALLY HAVE A LONG HISTORY OF WATCHING EACH OTHER'S BACKS.
AND FRED'S NOT SO BAD--YOU REALLY *SHOULD* TRY THE WINGS. THEY ARE FANTASTIC.
IS THAT WHAT YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF NOW? A TERRORIST?
WELL, I'D GO WITH "FREEDOM FIGHTER" OR JUST "PERSON WHO DIDN'T CLOSE THEIR EYES AND LET THE DAMN WORLD GET TAKEN OVER," BUT HEY, I DON'T WRITE THE HEADLINES. AND EVER SINCE ST. LOUIS--
THERE WERE A LOT OF CASUALTIES THAT DAY, MARIA.
"NEEDLESS ONES."
AND ALSO FOUR HYDRA GENERALS. IT'S CALLED AN OVERTON WINDOW, NAT, AND IF YOU LOOK OUT IT, YOU'LL SEE THE RULES ARE *DIFFERENT* NOW. TURNS OUT I WAS JUST *WAY* AHEAD OF THE CURVE.
BUT THEN, FROM WHAT I HEAR--
--IT SOUNDS LIKE YOU'VE ALREADY COME AROUND TO MY WAY OF THINKING.

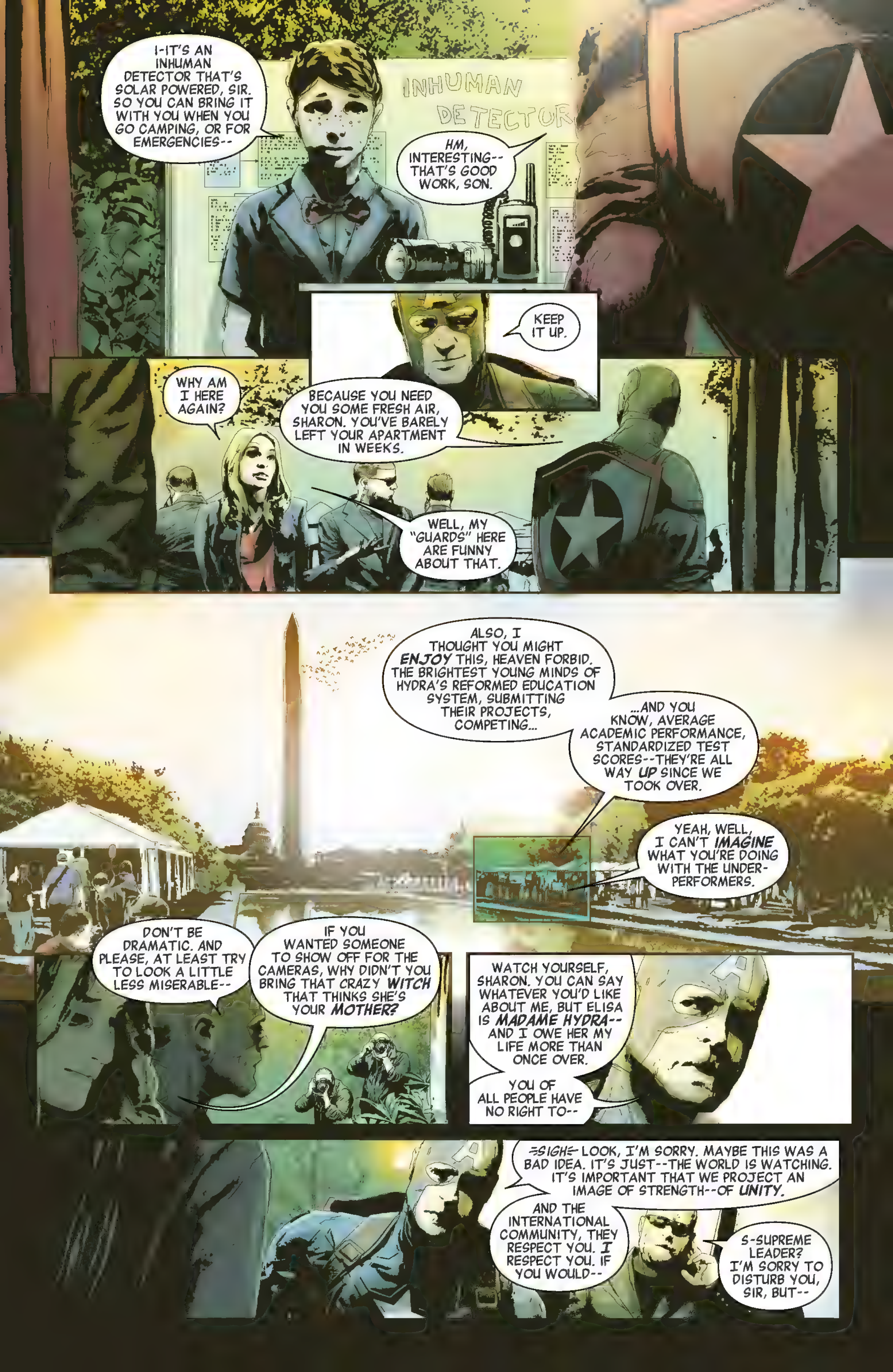

WE'RE NOT HERE TO PLAY CATCH-UP...
NO, OF COURSE NOT. AND I'M HAPPY TO HELP YOU WITH YOUR NEW MISSION AND ALL. THIS IS WHAT I WAS ABLE TO GET MY HANDS ON--
HIS SOCIAL CALENDAR?! THAT'S IT?!
IT'S THE BEST I COULD DO-- NOT EASY TO GET INTEL WHEN THE INFORMANTS KNOW THEY'LL WIND UP FACING A FIRING SQUAD--
"--AND MOST OF MY BEST PEOPLE ARE WASTING AWAY IN SIN AND CROSSBONES' SUPER-PRISON..."
BUT THERE ARE GOOD OPPORTUNITIES IN HERE. PLACES FOR YOU TO GET A CLEAN SHOT.
AND WHEN YOU DO, ALL I ASK IS THAT YOU POST SOME GOOD PICTURES.
YOU'RE DISGUSTING.
WHAT? HE GETS TO EXECUTE HALF MY FRIENDS AND LEVEL A CITY, BUT I'M THE BAD GUY FOR WANTING TO MAKE HIS CORPSE MY NEW iPHONE WALLPAPER?
WE ALL COPE IN DIFFERENT WAYS. BESIDES--
--WHO ARE YOU TO BE GIVING LECTURES ON DECENCY ANYHOW?
I MEAN, KIDS, NAT?

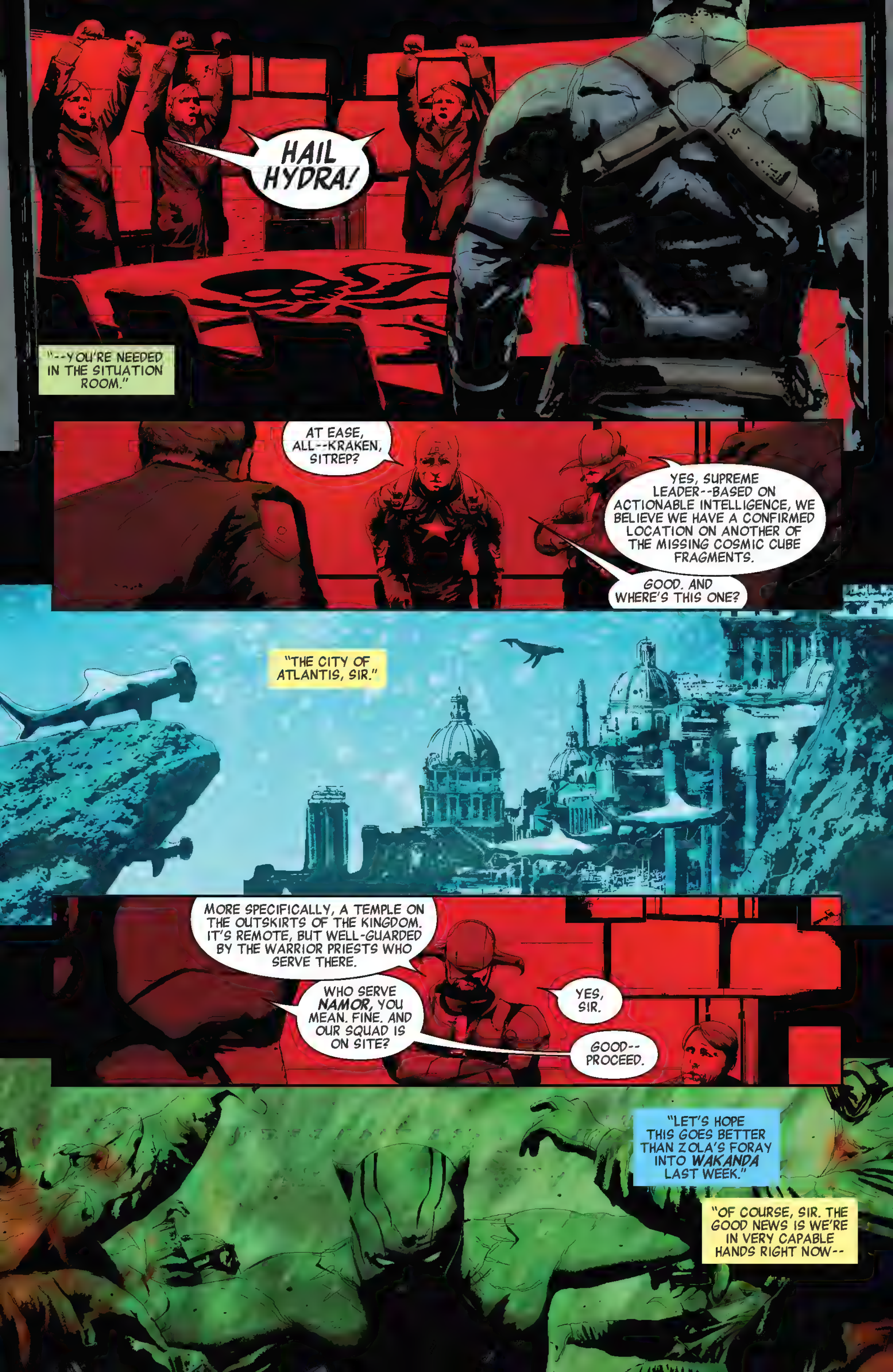

"EVEN *I'D* NEVER SINK THAT LOW."
YOU MADE IT THROUGH THE OUTER PROTECTIONS? FINE, TRAITORS--
--BUT IN 60 SECONDS, MY BOMB WILL CLEANSE THIS PLACE WITH *FIRE.* AND--
00:00:60
OKAY, PEOPLE-- WHERE'S THE *BOMB?*
I HAVE SCANNED THE SURROUNDING AREA AND CAN FIND NO EXPLOSIVE DEVICE--
BECAUSE SHE *IS* THE BOMB. AND I DON'T MEAN THAT IN A BAD '90s CATCHPHRASE KIND OF WAY.
IRONHEART'S RIGHT.
00:00:47
SHE INJECTED SOMETHING INTO HER *HEART*--IT'S PUMPING OUT INCREASINGLY POTENT NANOSIZED *FISSION BOMBS.* ONCE THERE'S ENOUGH OF THEM--
AIN'T NO WAY WE GET ALL THESE PEOPLE OUT OF HERE IN TIME.
AND THE BLAST IMPACT WILL BE TOO GREAT TO SHIELD THEM--
THEN WE GIVE THEM NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT. IF THE BOMB IS IN HER *BLOOD*--
00:00:32
--THEN I WILL MEET IT THERE.

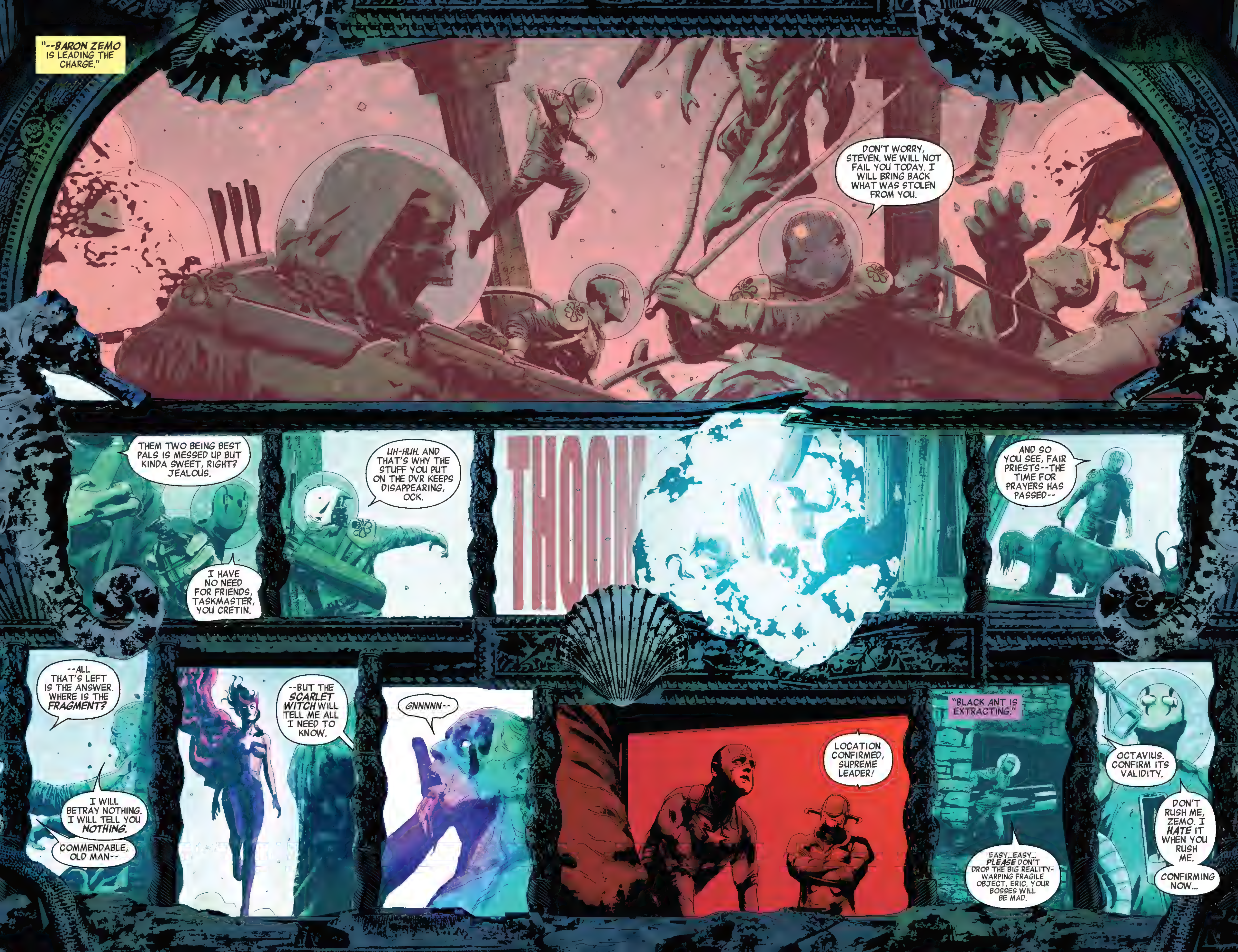

00:00:24
NADIA--MY INITIAL ASSESSMENT SHOWS THERE ARE 39 ACTIVATED CELLS. AT YOUR CURRENT RATE OF ELIMINATION--
VIV'S SAYING YOU DON'T HAVE ENOUGH TIME. YOU'LL NEVER **MAKE** IT--
NOT WITH **THAT** BADITUDE, AMADEUS!
00:00:17
I CAN **DO** THIS-- I CAN--
00:00:08
NADIA! HURRY, WE'RE ALMOST OUT OF--
00:00:01
THOOOM
YOU HAVE TO BE KIDDING ME. WE LOST? AGAIN?!
SERIOUSLY--THIS IS SOME KOBAYASHI MARU @#$! RIGHT HERE.
YEAH, HOW DID CHRIS PINE BEAT THAT THING?
CHRIS PINE? =SIGH=
I WEEP FOR THE FUTURE.
AND FOR THE RECORD, THIS EXERCISE WAS ENTIRELY WINNABLE--
--JUST LIKE THE **LAST** SEVEN. CAN SOMEONE TELL ME WHAT SIMPLE SOLUTION WAS AVAILABLE, BUT NOT EVEN **CONSIDERED** HERE?
STOP HER HEART.
THAT'S RIGHT, MILES. STOP THE **HEART**, STOP THE **BOMB** FROM GOING OFF.
YEAH--THERE'S A **REASON** WE DIDN'T CONSIDER THAT...
SERIOUSLY--THIS IS **POINTLESS**. I THOUGHT YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO BE TRAINING US. SPY STUFF! **NINJA** STUFF!
AND I AM.
ALL OF YOU KNOW HOW TO FIGHT. HOW TO ANALYZE AND SOLVE PROBLEMS.
WHAT YOU **DON'T** KNOW HOW TO DO IS MAKE THE IMPOSSIBLE CHOICES. FOR INSTANCE--
--WHEN YOU HAVE TO CHOOSE BETWEEN ONE MONSTER DYING AND 100 INNOCENT PEOPLE BEING KILLED, WHAT DO YOU DO?
FIND ANOTHER WAY...
AND WHEN THAT DOESN'T EXIST? WHEN THERE'S NO TIME TO COME UP WITH ANOTHER IDEA, OR TRY SOMETHING ELSE--WHEN IT'S DOWN TO HIM OR THEM?
THE OLD GUARD IS BEING PICKED OFF ONE BY ONE. PRETTY SOON, YOU WILL BE ALL THAT'S LEFT. AND WHEN THAT DAY COMES, YOU NEED TO BE WILLING TO FIGHT THE WAY A **WAR** DEMANDS.
I WISH THIS WAS NOT THE WORLD WE LEFT YOU. BUT IT IS. AND IF YOU WANT TO SURVIVE IN IT--
--YOU ARE GOING TO HAVE TO GIVE UP CHILDISH THINGS, ONCE AND FOR ALL.

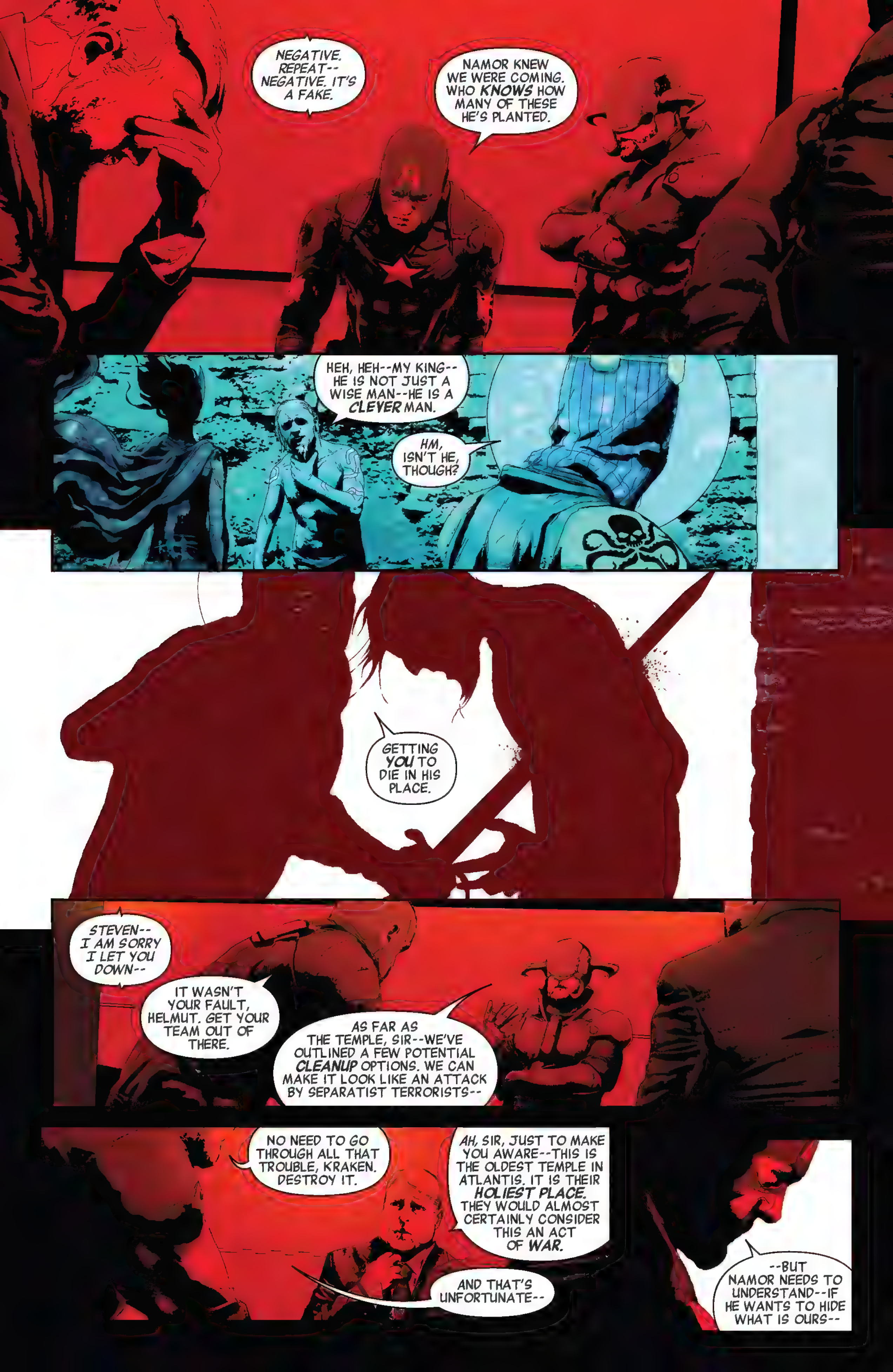

MONTANA.
NO.
SAM, COME ON, WAIT UP--
WE HAD A *DEAL,* ANT-MAN. YOU JUST BROKE IT.
WELL, IN MY DEFENSE, I'M A *VERY* DISHONEST PERSON.
SAM, *PLEASE*--IF YOU WOULD JUST HEAR US OUT--
YOU PEOPLE--YOU REALLY DON'T *GET* IT, DO YOU? I'M *NOT INTERESTED.*
I'M NOT INTERESTED IN PLAYING DRESS-UP, FIGHTING THE BAD GUYS, ACTING LIKE A DAMN FOOL. I GOT BETTER THINGS TO DO.
HH. LIKE *WHAT?*
LOOK AT YOU. WASTING AWAY IN SOME DISGUSTING BAR IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE. SMUGGLING FOR MONEY?
QUICKSILVER'S RIGHT, SAM--WHAT *ARE* YOU DOING HERE?
SIX HUNDRED AND FORTY-SEVEN.
SORRY?
SIX HUNDRED AND FORTY-SEVEN. THAT'S HOW MANY PEOPLE I'VE MANAGED TO GET ACROSS THE BORDER TO SOMEWHERE *SAFE,* TONY.
SOMEWHERE THEY WON'T BE LOCKED UP, OR KILLED, OR *WORSE.* AND *BELIEVE* ME, THERE'S WORSE.
I DID MY TIME AS CAPTAIN AMERICA, TRYING TO CHANGE THINGS. CAUSED ME A LOT OF PAIN AND HEARTBREAK, AND AT THE END, I HAD A WHOLE LOT OF NOTHING TO SHOW FOR IT.
I'M *DONE* TRYING TO MAKE THE WORLD SOMETHING IT CLEARLY DOESN'T WANT TO BE. I'M JUST GONNA DO WHAT I CAN TO HELP THE PEOPLE THAT NEED HELP, AND LEAVE THE REVOLUTION TO GENIUSES LIKE YOU ALL. BESIDES--

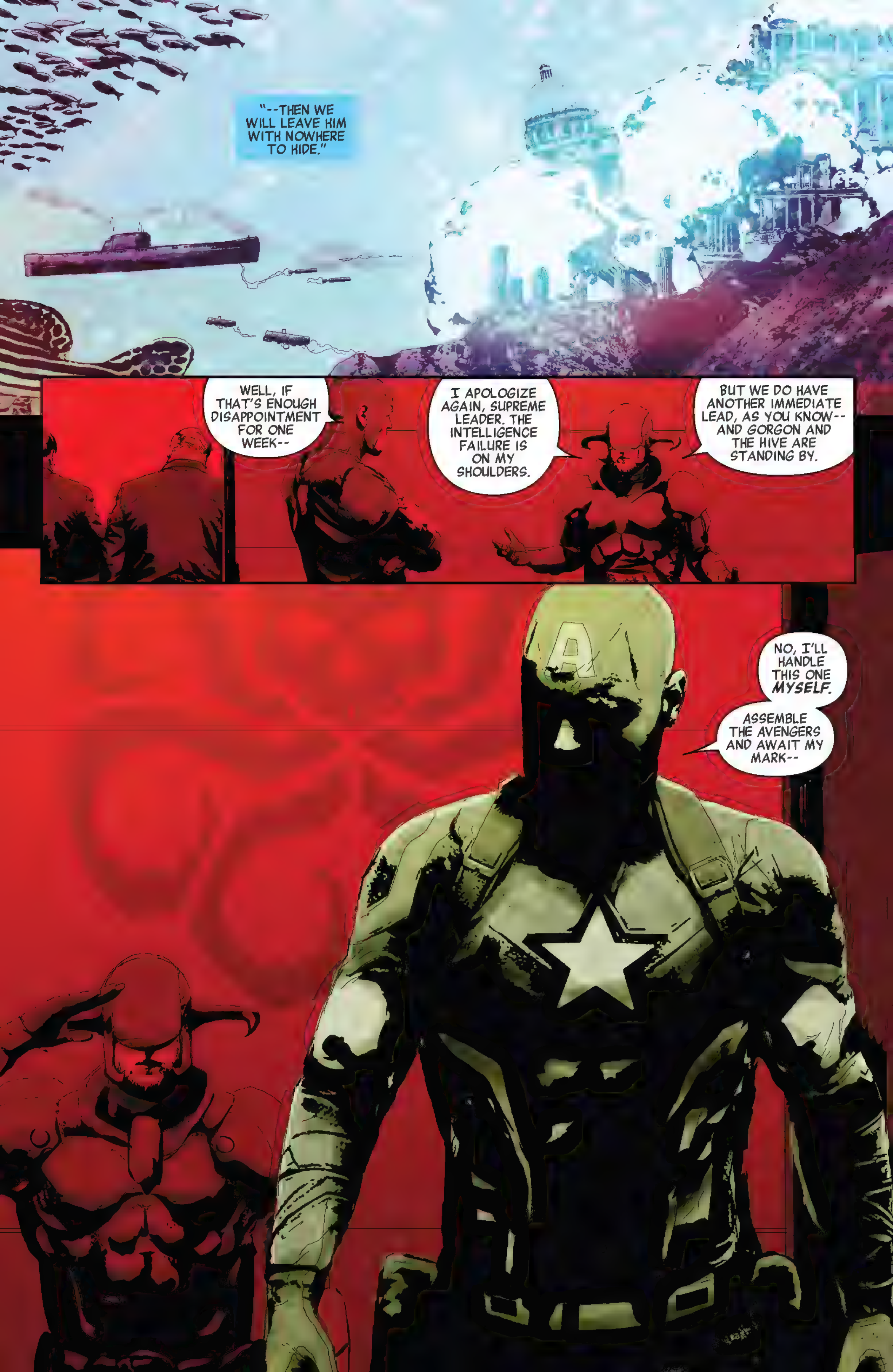

--I DON'T KNOW IF YOU *NOTICED,* BUT NOBODY IS FIGHTING IN THE STREETS ANYMORE. MOST FOLKS GAVE UP QUICK.
THEY SEEM TO BE PERFECTLY ALL RIGHT LOOKING THE OTHER WAY. HELL, FOR A LOT OF PEOPLE, HYDRA SUITS THEM *JUST FINE.* SO MAYBE THIS IS WHO WE ARE AFTER ALL. MAYBE THIS IS US GETTING WHAT WE *DESERVE.*
AND WHAT ABOUT THE CAPTAIN? WHAT DOES *HE* DESERVE?
WHAT'S HERC TALKING ABOUT?
WE FIGURED IT OUT, SAM--WHAT HAPPENED. THAT'S NOT THE REAL STEVE.
YOU THINK I DON'T *KNOW* THAT?
IT WAS THE COSMIC CUBE. THOSE THINGS SUCK. IT MADE HIM LIKE THIS, BUT--WE CAN *FIX* IT. TONY INVENTED A WHATCHAMAJIG--
IT'S WHAT I DO. THE FRAGMENTS OF THE CUBE THAT CHANGED HIM ARE OUT THERE, SCATTERED. WE JUST--NEED TO GET OUT OF THE COUNTRY, TO FIND THEM.
I GET THAT IT SOUNDS CRAZY, BUT--YOU KNOW HE WOULD DO IT FOR US. THIS IS OUR ONE CHANCE, SAM--
--THIS IS OUR CHANCE TO *SAVE* HIM.
HYDRA YOUTH
ANNUAL SCIENCE FAIR ON THE MALL
AND WHAT IS THIS, THEN?

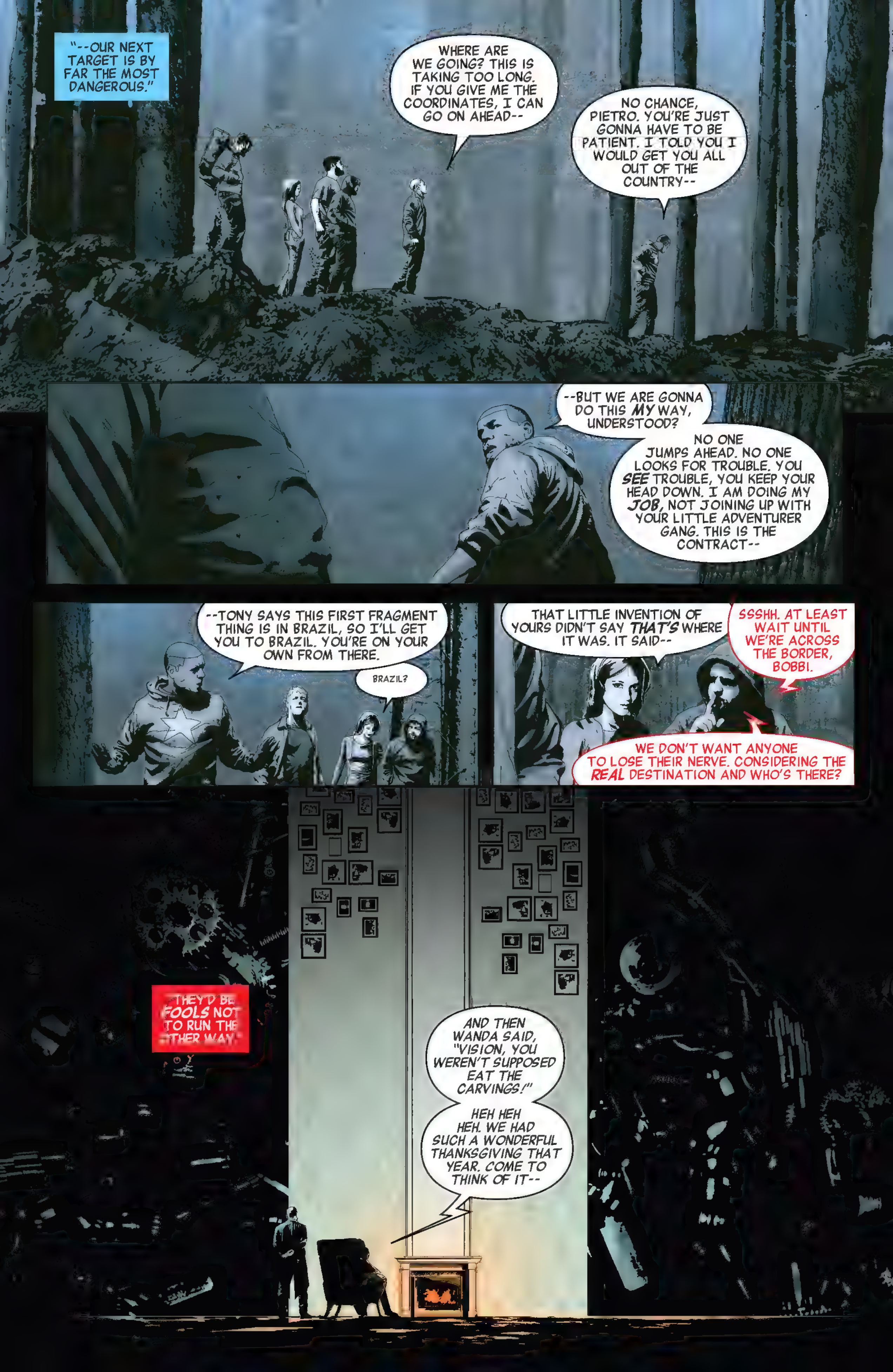

I-IT'S AN INHUMAN DETECTOR THAT'S SOLAR POWERED, SIR. SO YOU CAN BRING IT WITH YOU WHEN YOU GO CAMPING, OR FOR EMERGENCIES--
INHUMAN DETECTOR
HM, INTERESTING-- THAT'S GOOD WORK, SON.
KEEP IT UP.
WHY AM I HERE AGAIN?
BECAUSE YOU NEED YOU SOME FRESH AIR, SHARON. YOU'VE BARELY LEFT YOUR APARTMENT IN WEEKS.
WELL, MY "GUARDS" HERE ARE FUNNY ABOUT THAT.
ALSO, I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT *ENJOY* THIS, HEAVEN FORBID. THE BRIGHTEST YOUNG MINDS OF HYDRA'S REFORMED EDUCATION SYSTEM, SUBMITTING THEIR PROJECTS, COMPETING...
...AND YOU KNOW, AVERAGE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, STANDARDIZED TEST SCORES--THEY'RE ALL WAY *UP* SINCE WE TOOK OVER.
YEAH, WELL, I CAN'T *IMAGINE* WHAT YOU'RE DOING WITH THE UNDER-PERFORMERS.
DON'T BE DRAMATIC. AND PLEASE, AT LEAST TRY TO LOOK A LITTLE LESS MISERABLE--
IF YOU WANTED SOMEONE TO SHOW OFF FOR THE CAMERAS, WHY DIDN'T YOU BRING THAT CRAZY *WITCH* THAT THINKS SHE'S YOUR *MOTHER?*
WATCH YOURSELF, SHARON. YOU CAN SAY WHATEVER YOU'D LIKE ABOUT ME, BUT ELISA IS *MADAME HYDRA*-- AND I OWE HER MY LIFE MORE THAN ONCE OVER.
YOU OF ALL PEOPLE HAVE NO RIGHT TO--
=SIGH= LOOK, I'M SORRY. MAYBE THIS WAS A BAD IDEA. IT'S JUST--THE WORLD IS WATCHING. IT'S IMPORTANT THAT WE PROJECT AN IMAGE OF STRENGTH--OF *UNITY.*
AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY, THEY RESPECT YOU. *I* RESPECT YOU. IF YOU WOULD--
S-SUPREME LEADER? I'M SORRY TO DISTURB YOU, SIR, BUT--

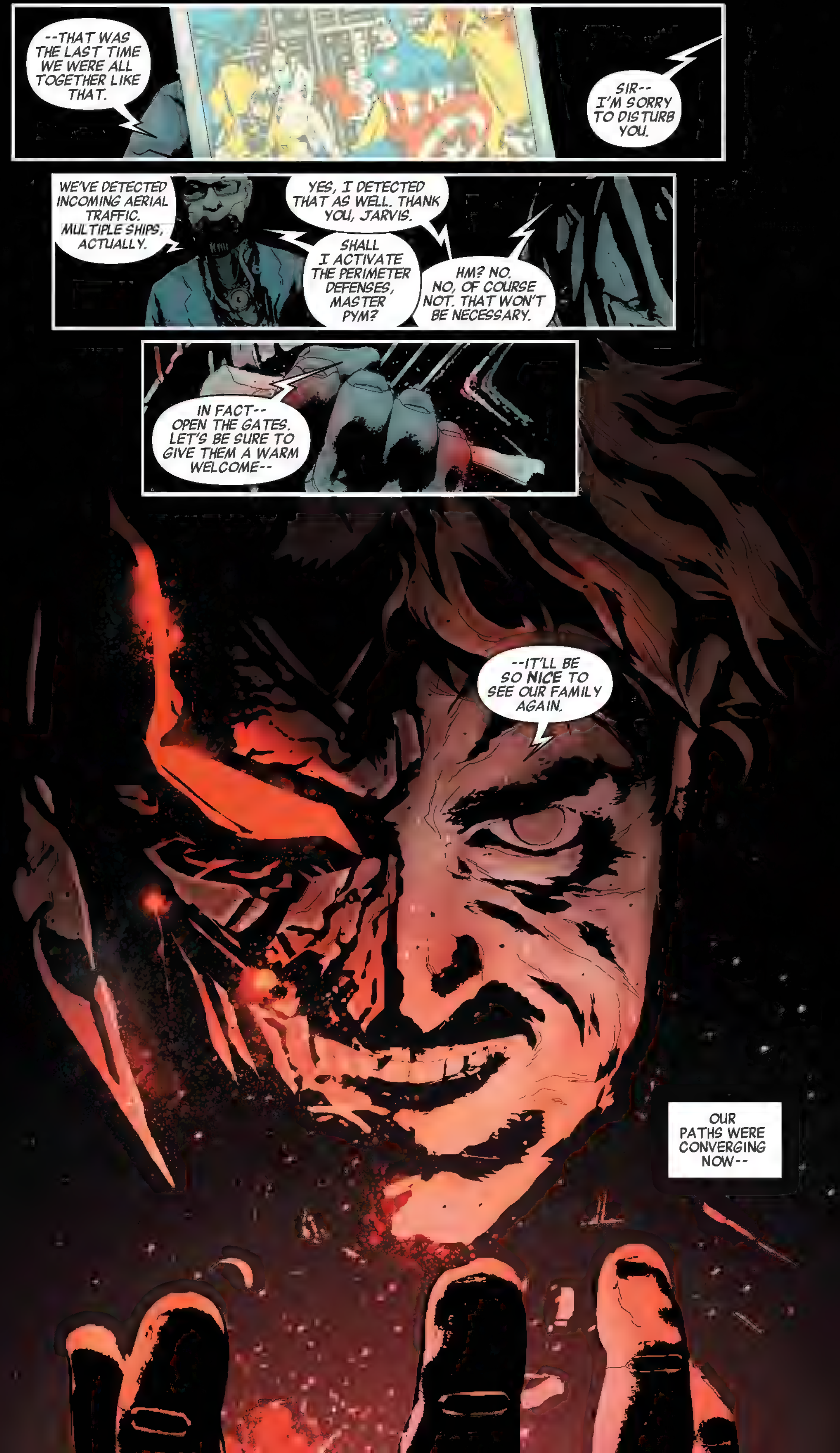

HAIL HYDRA!
"--YOU'RE NEEDED IN THE SITUATION ROOM."
AT EASE, ALL--KRAKEN, SITREP?
YES, SUPREME LEADER--BASED ON ACTIONABLE INTELLIGENCE, WE BELIEVE WE HAVE A CONFIRMED LOCATION ON ANOTHER OF THE MISSING COSMIC CUBE FRAGMENTS.
GOOD. AND WHERE'S THIS ONE?
"THE CITY OF ATLANTIS, SIR."
MORE SPECIFICALLY, A TEMPLE ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE KINGDOM. IT'S REMOTE, BUT WELL-GUARDED BY THE WARRIOR PRIESTS WHO SERVE THERE.
WHO SERVE **NAMOR,** YOU MEAN. FINE. AND OUR SQUAD IS ON SITE?
YES, SIR.
GOOD--PROCEED.
"LET'S HOPE THIS GOES BETTER THAN ZOLA'S FORAY INTO ***WAKANDA*** LAST WEEK."
"OF COURSE, SIR. THE GOOD NEWS IS WE'RE IN VERY CAPABLE HANDS RIGHT NOW--

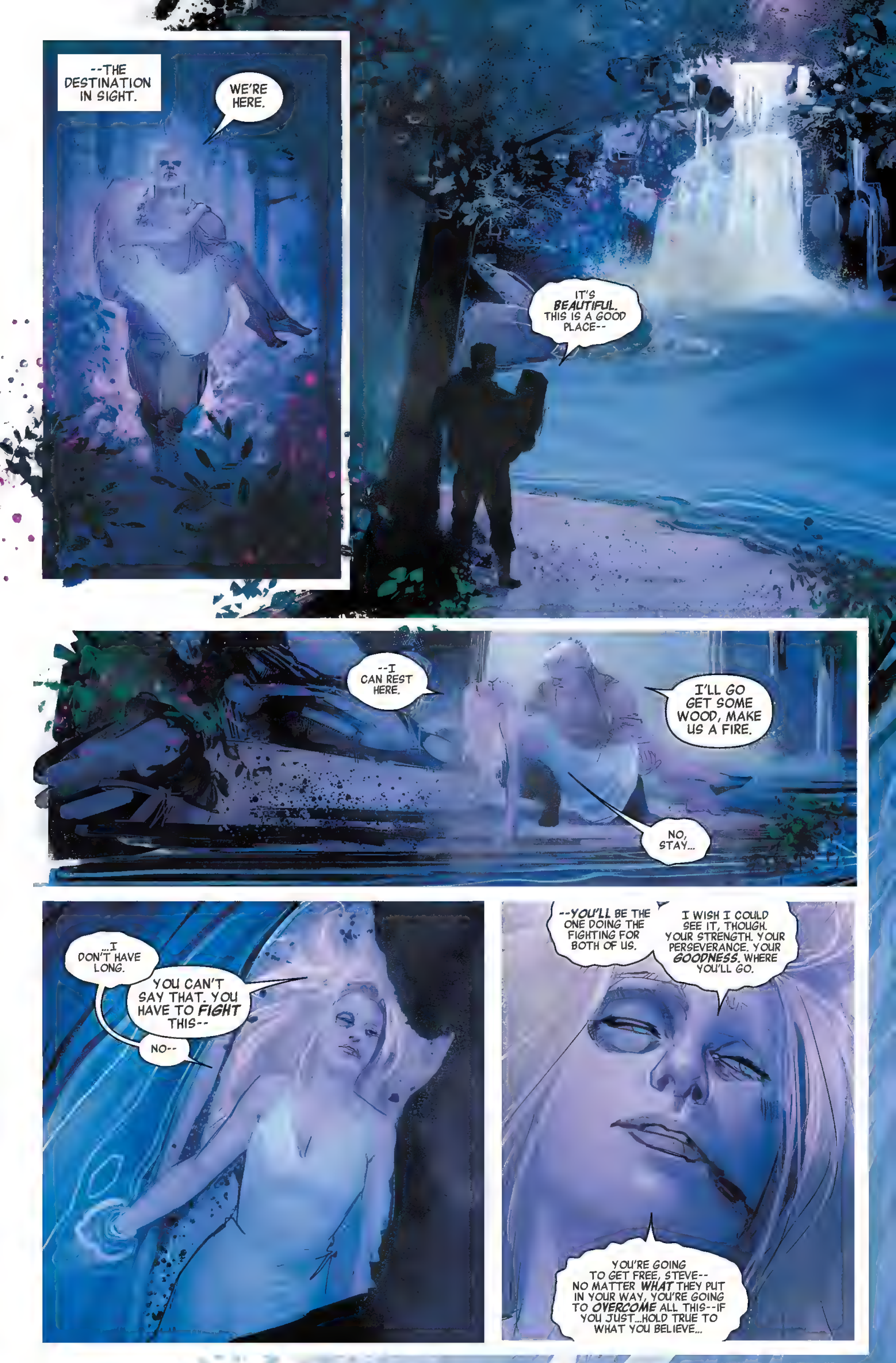

"--BARON ZEMO IS LEADING THE CHARGE."
DON'T WORRY, STEVEN. WE WILL NOT FAIL YOU TODAY. I WILL BRING BACK WHAT WAS STOLEN FROM YOU.
THEM TWO BEING BEST PALS IS MESSED UP BUT KINDA SWEET, RIGHT? JEALOUS.
I HAVE NO NEED FOR FRIENDS, TASKMASTER, YOU CRETIN.
UH-HUH. AND THAT'S WHY THE STUFF YOU PUT ON THE DVR KEEPS DISAPPEARING, OCK.
THOOM
AND SO YOU SEE, FAIR PRIESTS--THE TIME FOR PRAYERS HAS PASSED--
--ALL THAT'S LEFT IS THE ANSWER. WHERE IS THE *FRAGMENT?*
I WILL BETRAY NOTHING. I WILL TELL YOU *NOTHING.*
COMMENDABLE, OLD MAN--
--BUT THE *SCARLET WITCH* WILL TELL ME ALL I NEED TO KNOW.
GNNNNN--
LOCATION CONFIRMED, SUPREME LEADER!
"BLACK ANT IS EXTRACTING."
EASY...EASY... *PLEASE* DON'T DROP THE BIG REALITY-WARPING FRAGILE OBJECT, ERIC. YOUR BOSSES WILL BE MAD.
OCTAVIUS. CONFIRM ITS VALIDITY.
DON'T RUSH ME, ZEMO. I *HATE* IT WHEN YOU RUSH ME.
CONFIRMING NOW...

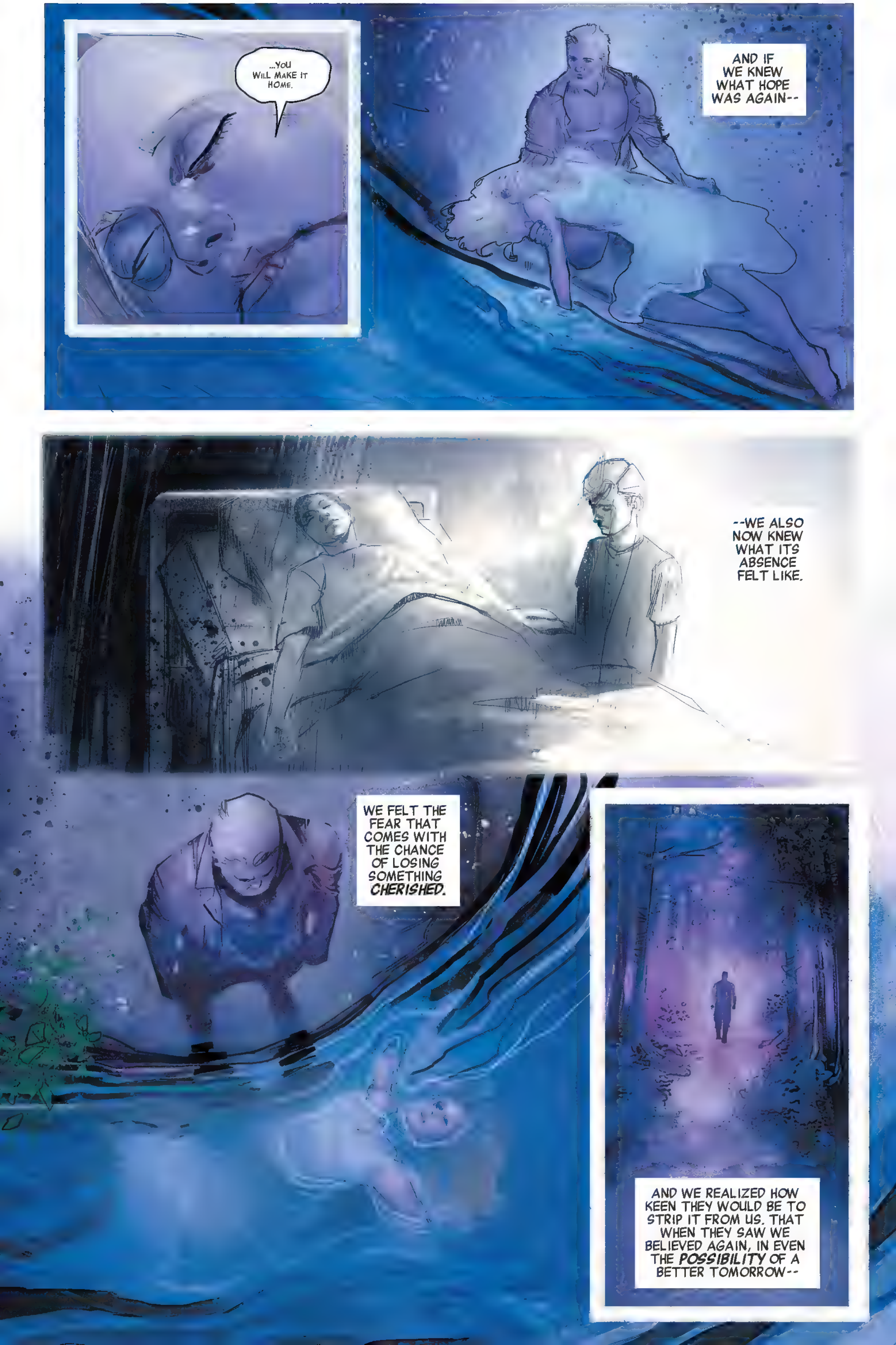

NEGATIVE. REPEAT--NEGATIVE. IT'S A FAKE.
NAMOR KNEW WE WERE COMING. WHO **KNOWS** HOW MANY OF THESE HE'S PLANTED.
HEH, HEH--MY KING--HE IS NOT JUST A WISE MAN--HE IS A **CLEVER** MAN.
HM, ISN'T HE, THOUGH?
GETTING **YOU** TO DIE IN HIS PLACE.
STEVEN--I AM SORRY I LET YOU DOWN--
IT WASN'T YOUR FAULT, HELMUT. GET YOUR TEAM OUT OF THERE.
AS FAR AS THE TEMPLE, SIR--WE'VE OUTLINED A FEW POTENTIAL **CLEANUP** OPTIONS. WE CAN MAKE IT LOOK LIKE AN ATTACK BY SEPARATIST TERRORISTS--
NO NEED TO GO THROUGH ALL THAT TROUBLE, KRAKEN. DESTROY IT.
AH, SIR, JUST TO MAKE YOU AWARE--THIS IS THE OLDEST TEMPLE IN ATLANTIS. IT IS THEIR **HOLIEST PLACE.** THEY WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY CONSIDER THIS AN ACT OF **WAR.**
AND THAT'S UNFORTUNATE--
--BUT NAMOR NEEDS TO UNDERSTAND--IF HE WANTS TO HIDE WHAT IS OURS--

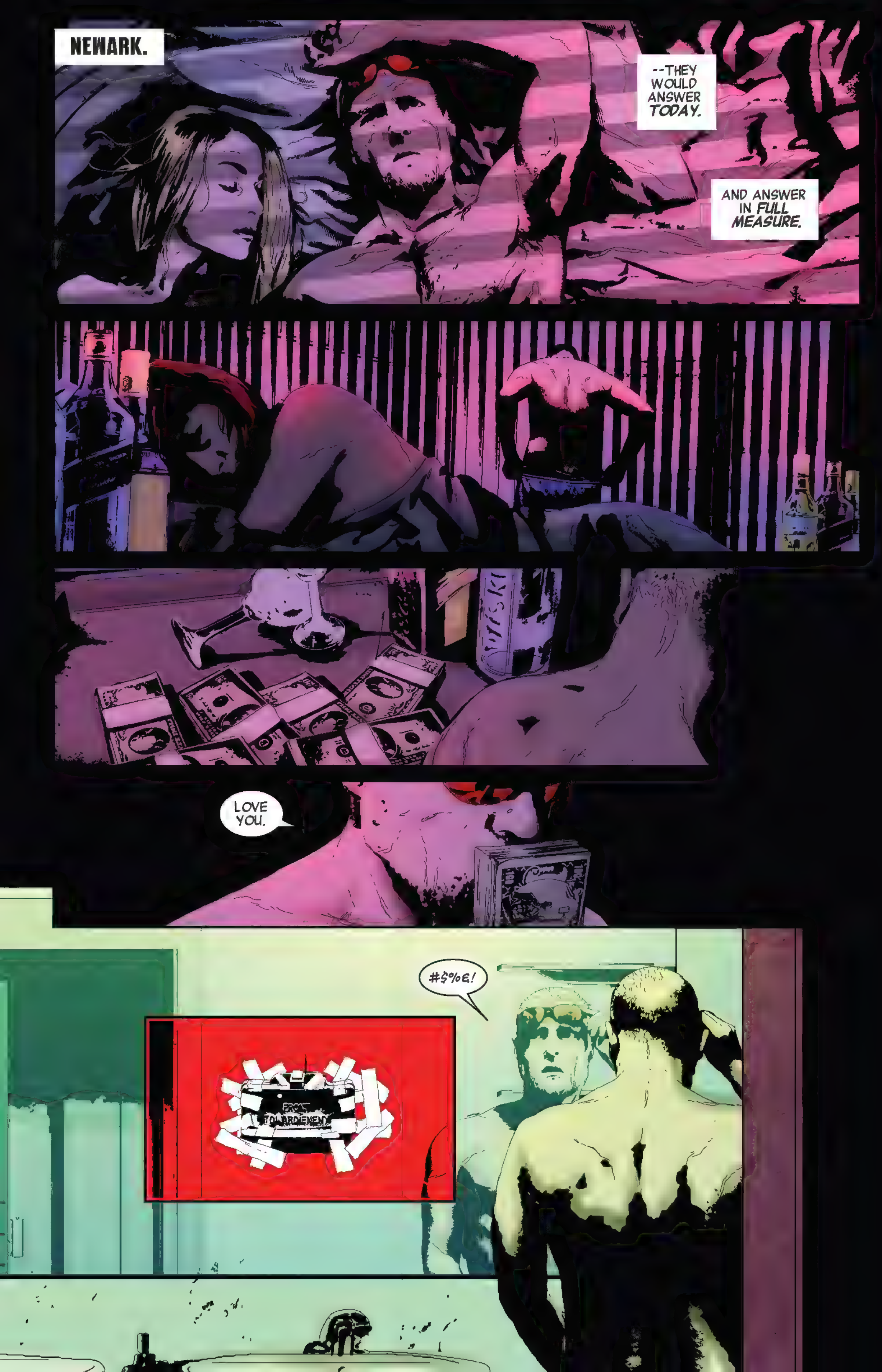

"--THEN WE WILL LEAVE HIM WITH NOWHERE TO HIDE."
WELL, IF THAT'S ENOUGH DISAPPOINTMENT FOR ONE WEEK--
I APOLOGIZE AGAIN, SUPREME LEADER. THE INTELLIGENCE FAILURE IS ON MY SHOULDERS.
BUT WE DO HAVE ANOTHER IMMEDIATE LEAD, AS YOU KNOW--AND GORGON AND THE HIVE ARE STANDING BY.
NO, I'LL HANDLE THIS ONE *MYSELF*.
ASSEMBLE THE AVENGERS AND AWAIT MY MARK--

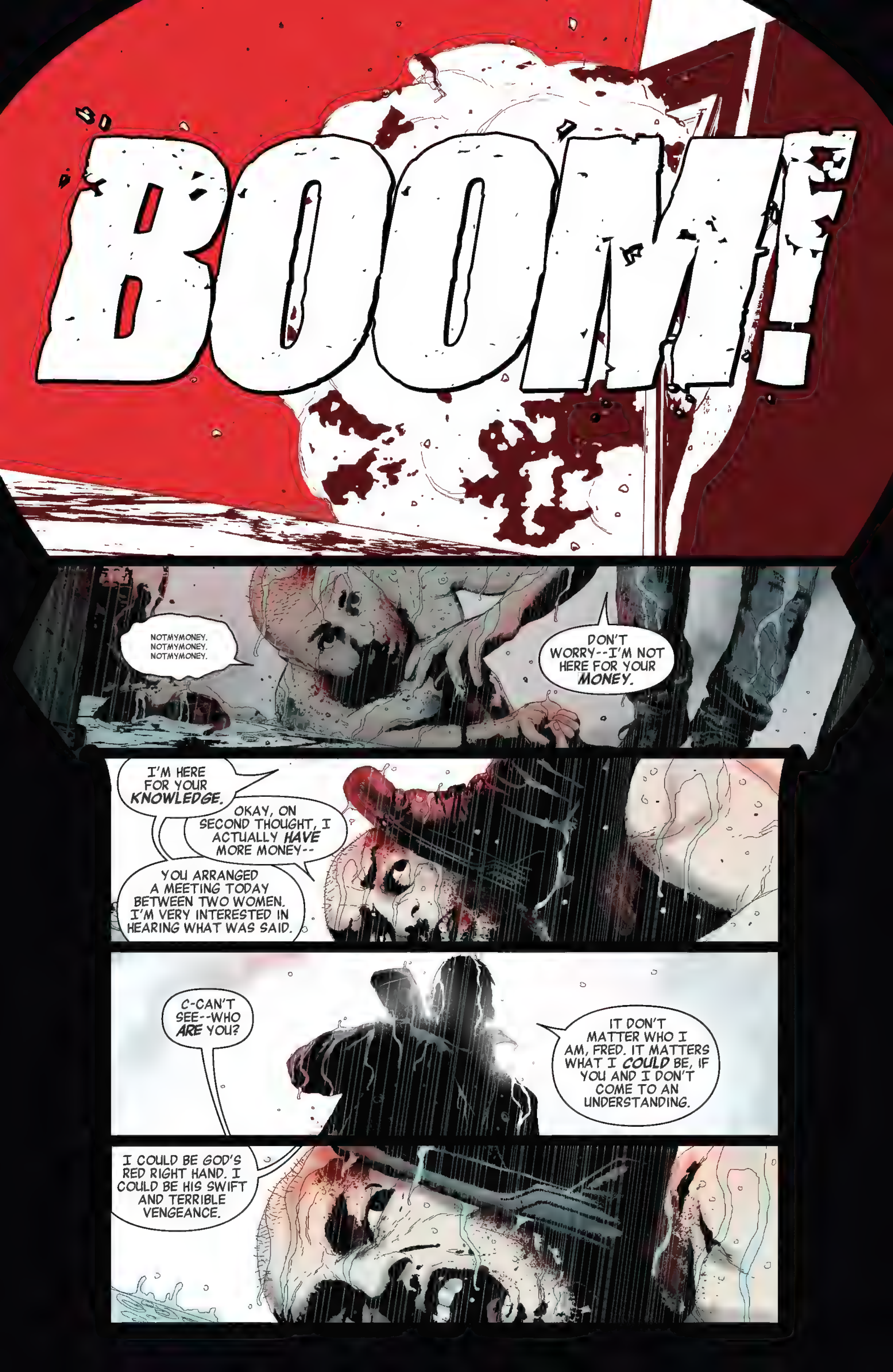

"--OUR NEXT TARGET IS BY FAR THE MOST DANGEROUS."
WHERE ARE WE GOING? THIS IS TAKING TOO LONG. IF YOU GIVE ME THE COORDINATES, I CAN GO ON AHEAD--
NO CHANCE, PIETRO. YOU'RE JUST GONNA HAVE TO BE PATIENT. I TOLD YOU I WOULD GET YOU ALL OUT OF THE COUNTRY--
--BUT WE ARE GONNA DO THIS *MY* WAY, UNDERSTOOD?
NO ONE JUMPS AHEAD. NO ONE LOOKS FOR TROUBLE. YOU *SEE* TROUBLE, YOU KEEP YOUR HEAD DOWN. I AM DOING MY *JOB*, NOT JOINING UP WITH YOUR LITTLE ADVENTURER GANG. THIS IS THE CONTRACT--
--TONY SAYS THIS FIRST FRAGMENT THING IS IN BRAZIL, SO I'LL GET YOU TO BRAZIL. YOU'RE ON YOUR OWN FROM THERE.
BRAZIL?
THAT LITTLE INVENTION OF YOURS DIDN'T SAY *THAT'S* WHERE IT WAS. IT SAID--
SSSHH. AT LEAST WAIT UNTIL WE'RE ACROSS THE BORDER, BOBBI.
WE DON'T WANT ANYONE TO LOSE THEIR NERVE. CONSIDERING THE *REAL* DESTINATION AND WHO'S THERE?
"THEY'D BE *FOOLS* NOT TO RUN THE OTHER WAY."
AND THEN WANDA SAID, "VISION, YOU WEREN'T SUPPOSED EAT THE CARVINGS!"
HEH HEH HEH. WE HAD SUCH A WONDERFUL THANKSGIVING THAT YEAR. COME TO THINK OF IT--

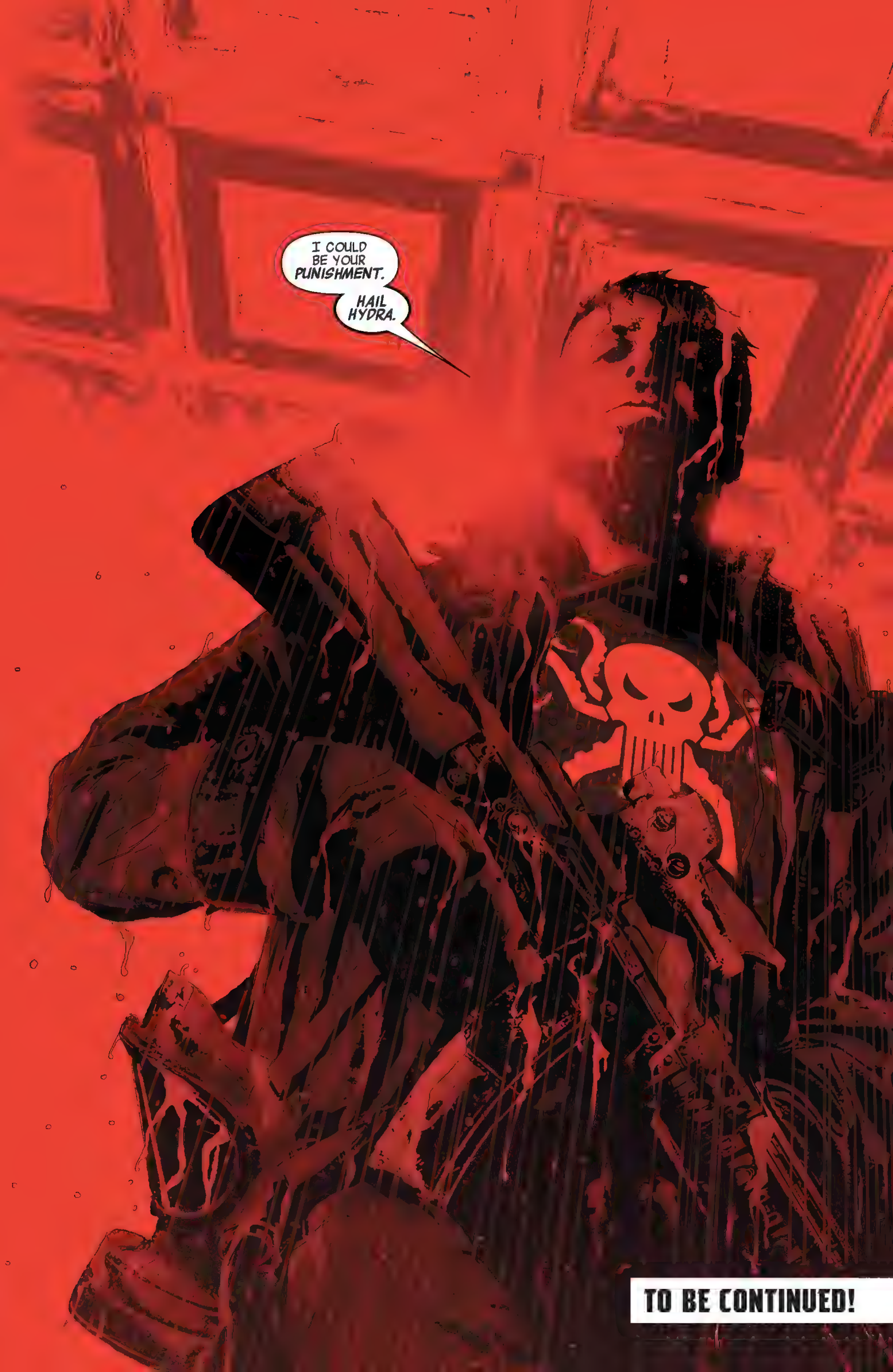

--THAT WAS THE LAST TIME WE WERE ALL TOGETHER LIKE THAT.
SIR-- I'M SORRY TO DISTURB YOU.
WE'VE DETECTED INCOMING AERIAL TRAFFIC. MULTIPLE SHIPS, ACTUALLY.
YES, I DETECTED THAT AS WELL. THANK YOU, JARVIS.
SHALL I ACTIVATE THE PERIMETER DEFENSES, MASTER PYM?
HM? NO. NO, OF COURSE NOT. THAT WON'T BE NECESSARY.
IN FACT-- OPEN THE GATES. LET'S BE SURE TO GIVE THEM A WARM WELCOME--
--IT'LL BE SO **NICE** TO SEE OUR FAMILY AGAIN.
OUR PATHS WERE CONVERGING NOW--


--THE DESTINATION IN SIGHT.
WE'RE HERE.
IT'S *BEAUTIFUL.* THIS IS A GOOD PLACE--
--I CAN REST HERE.
I'LL GO GET SOME WOOD, MAKE US A FIRE.
NO, STAY...
...I DON'T HAVE LONG.
YOU CAN'T SAY THAT. YOU HAVE TO *FIGHT* THIS--
NO--
--*YOU'LL* BE THE ONE DOING THE FIGHTING FOR BOTH OF US.
I WISH I COULD SEE IT, THOUGH. YOUR STRENGTH. YOUR PERSEVERANCE. YOUR *GOODNESS.* WHERE YOU'LL GO.
YOU'RE GOING TO GET FREE, STEVE-- NO MATTER *WHAT* THEY PUT IN YOUR WAY, YOU'RE GOING TO *OVERCOME* ALL THIS--IF YOU JUST...HOLD TRUE TO WHAT YOU BELIEVE...


...You will make it home.
And if we knew what hope was again--
--We also now knew what its absence felt like.
We felt the fear that comes with the chance of losing something *cherished.*
And we realized how keen they would be to strip it from us. That when they saw we believed again, in even the *possibility* of a better tomorrow--

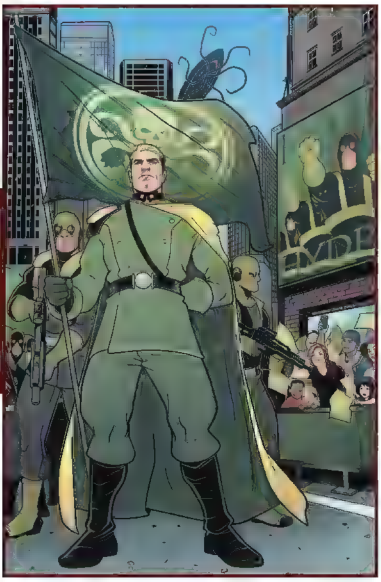

NEWARK.
--THEY WOULD ANSWER *TODAY.*
AND ANSWER IN *FULL MEASURE.*
LOVE YOU.
#$%&!
FRONT TOWARD ENEMY


BOOM!
NOTMYMONEY. NOTMYMONEY. NOTMYMONEY.
DON'T WORRY--I'M NOT HERE FOR YOUR *MONEY.*
I'M HERE FOR YOUR *KNOWLEDGE.*
OKAY, ON SECOND THOUGHT, I ACTUALLY *HAVE* MORE MONEY--
YOU ARRANGED A MEETING TODAY BETWEEN TWO WOMEN. I'M VERY INTERESTED IN HEARING WHAT WAS SAID.
C-CAN'T SEE--WHO *ARE* YOU?
IT DON'T MATTER WHO I AM, FRED. IT MATTERS WHAT I *COULD* BE, IF YOU AND I DON'T COME TO AN UNDERSTANDING.
I COULD BE GOD'S RED RIGHT HAND. I COULD BE HIS SWIFT AND TERRIBLE VENGEANCE.


I COULD BE YOUR *PUNISHMENT.*
*HAIL HYDRA.*
TO BE CONTINUED!

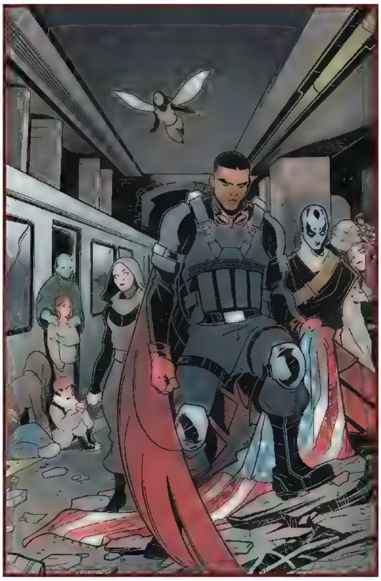
# Secret Empire
## May

### Captain America: Steve Rogers #17



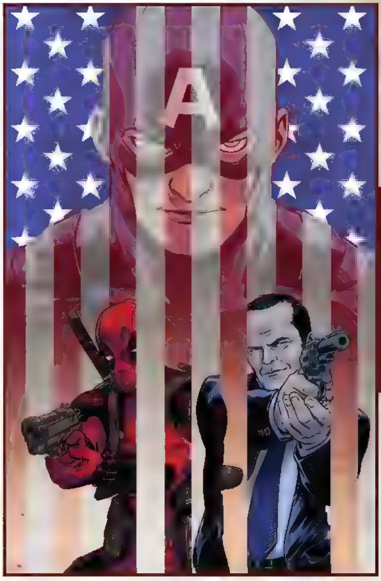
In Cap we trust!

### Captain America: Sam Wilson #22



Sam Wilson
flies again!

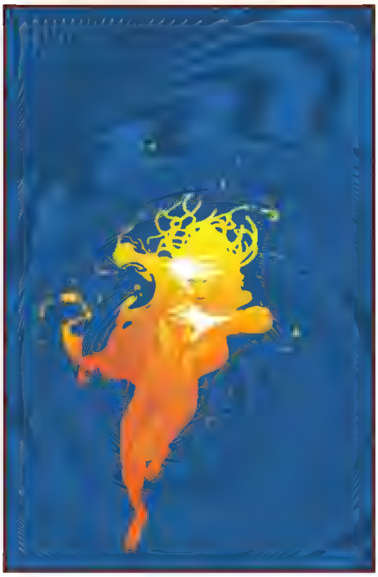
### Deadpool #31



Steve Rogers' red right
hand has a job to do...

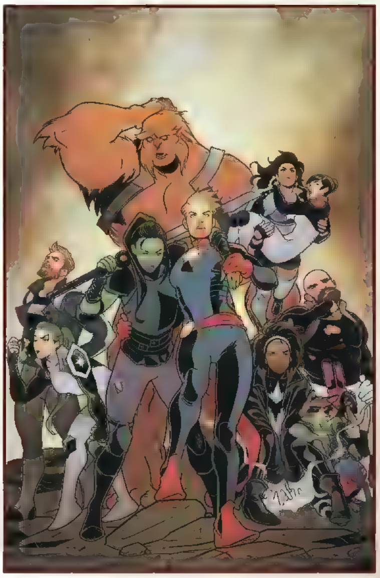
## Beyond the Shield

### Ultimates$^2$ #7



Will Galactus help the
stranded heroes?

### The Mighty Captain Marvel #5



Outnumbered & outgunned,
Captain Marvel fights
to keep hope alive!

# SECRET EMPIRE

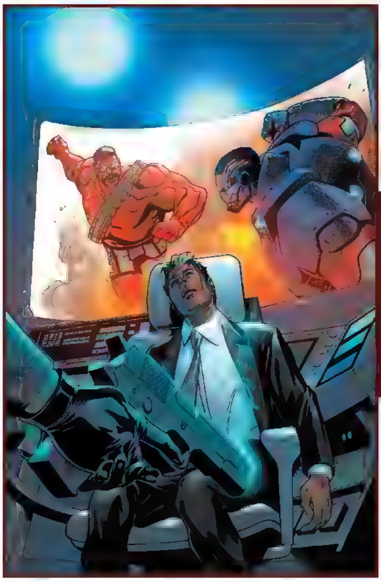
## MAY

### SECRET WARRIORS #1

### SECRET WARRIORS #2

QUAKE ASSEMBLES THE NEXT GENERATION OF INHUMANS TO TAKE ON STEVE ROGERS!

### U.S.AVENGERS #6



CAP WANTS S.H.I.E.L.D.--AND ROBERTO DA COSTA IS IN HIS WAY.

## DARKFORCE NEW YORK

### DOCTOR STRANGE #21

CAN THE SORCERER SUPREME PROTECT A CITY BESIEGED BY DARK FORCES?

# SECRET EMPIRE
## NEXT

SECRET EMPIRE
MARVEL
#4

THE HEROES OF THE UNDERGROUND HAVE DISCOVERED THE SECRET TO SAVING CAPTAIN AMERICA, BUT TO GET WHAT THEY NEED, THEY'LL HAVE TO GO THROUGH ONE OF THEIR GREATEST ENEMIES: ULTRON.

### SECRET EMPIRE: UNDERGROUND #1

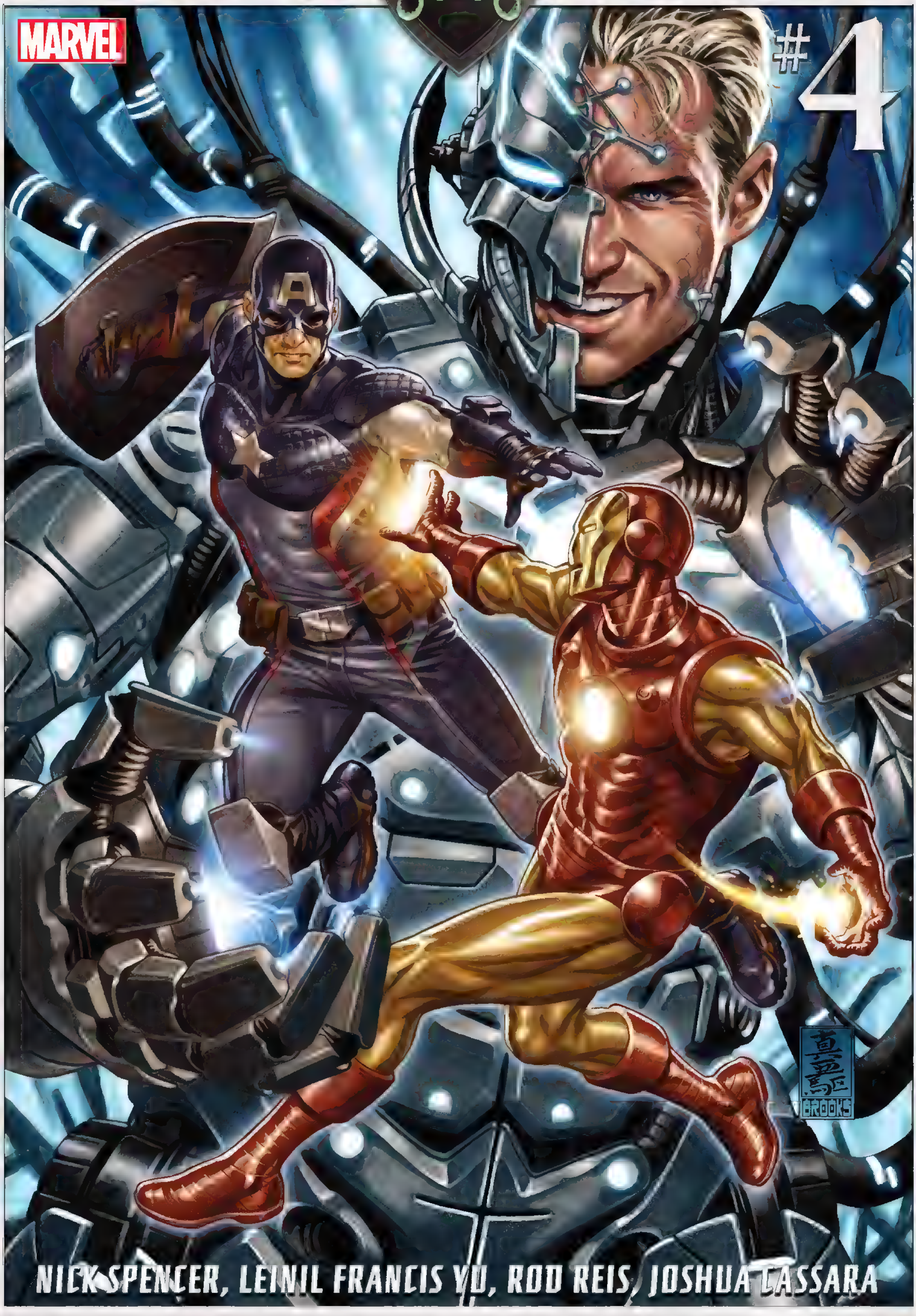
### SECRET EMPIRE: UPRISING #1

### SECRET EMPIRE: UNITED #1

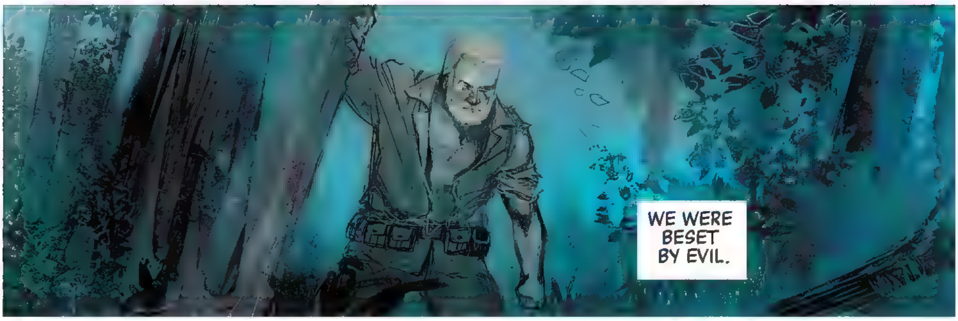
# SECRET EMPIRE™

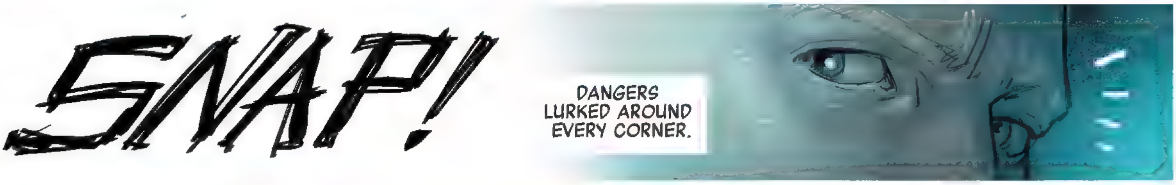
MARVEL

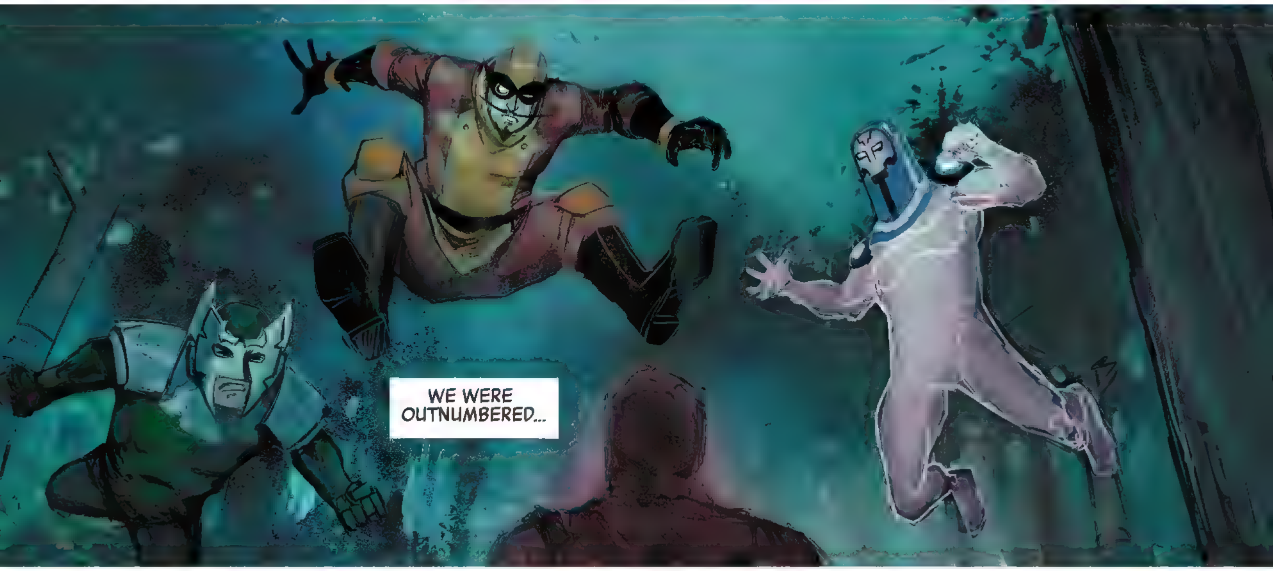
# #4

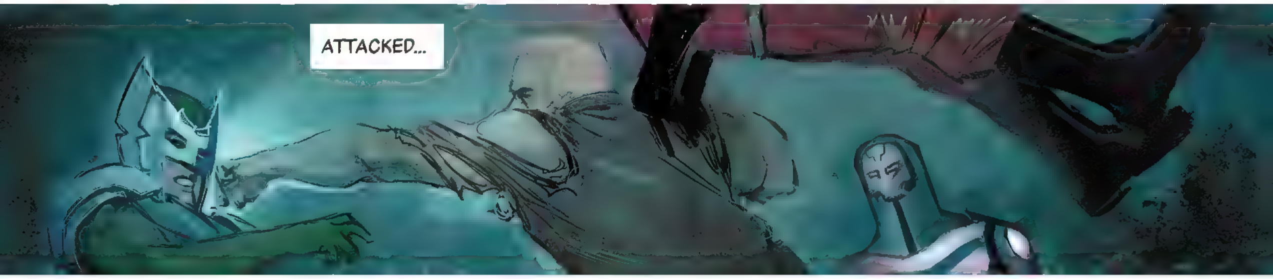


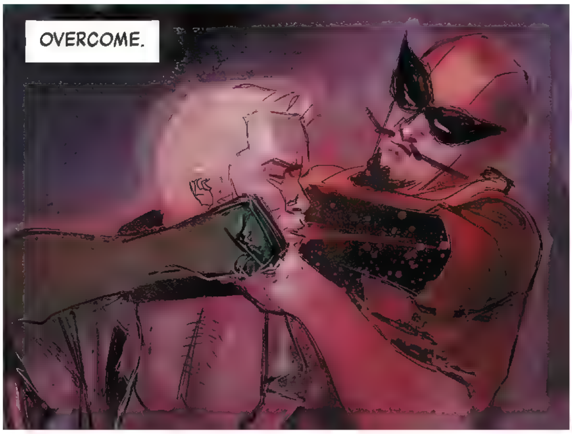
NICK SPENCER, LEINIL FRANCIS YU, ROD REIS, JOSHUA CASSARA

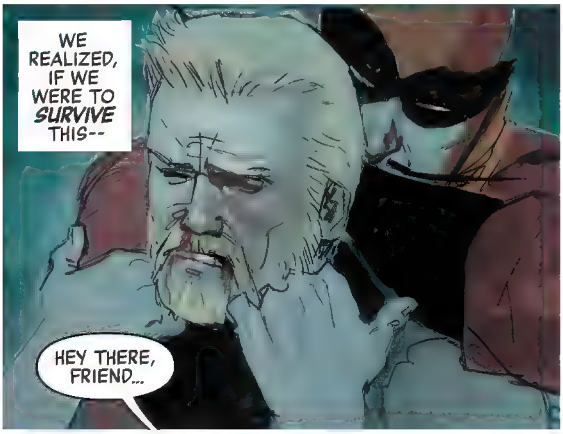

WE WERE BESET BY EVIL.

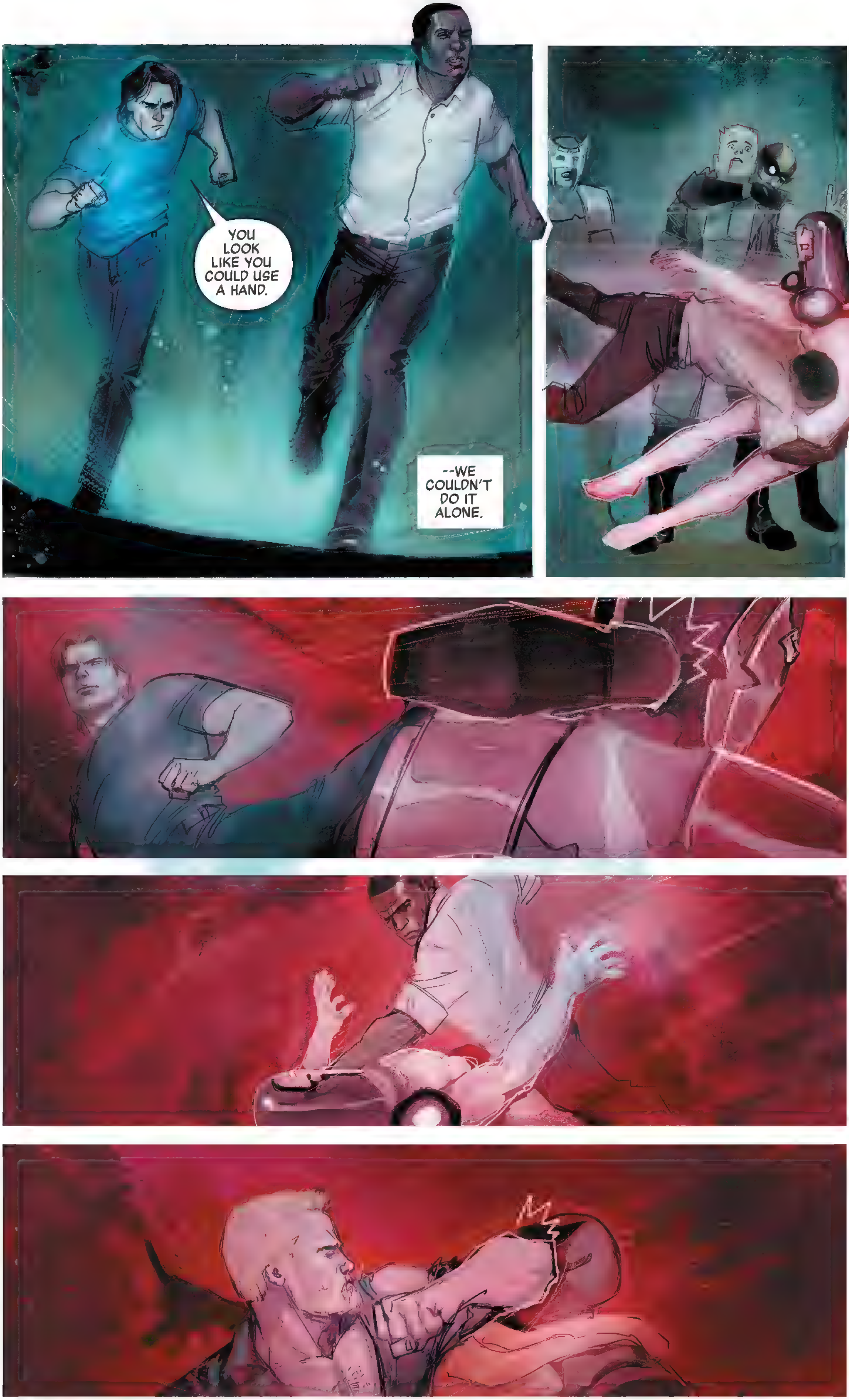

SNAP!
DANGERS LURKED AROUND EVERY CORNER.

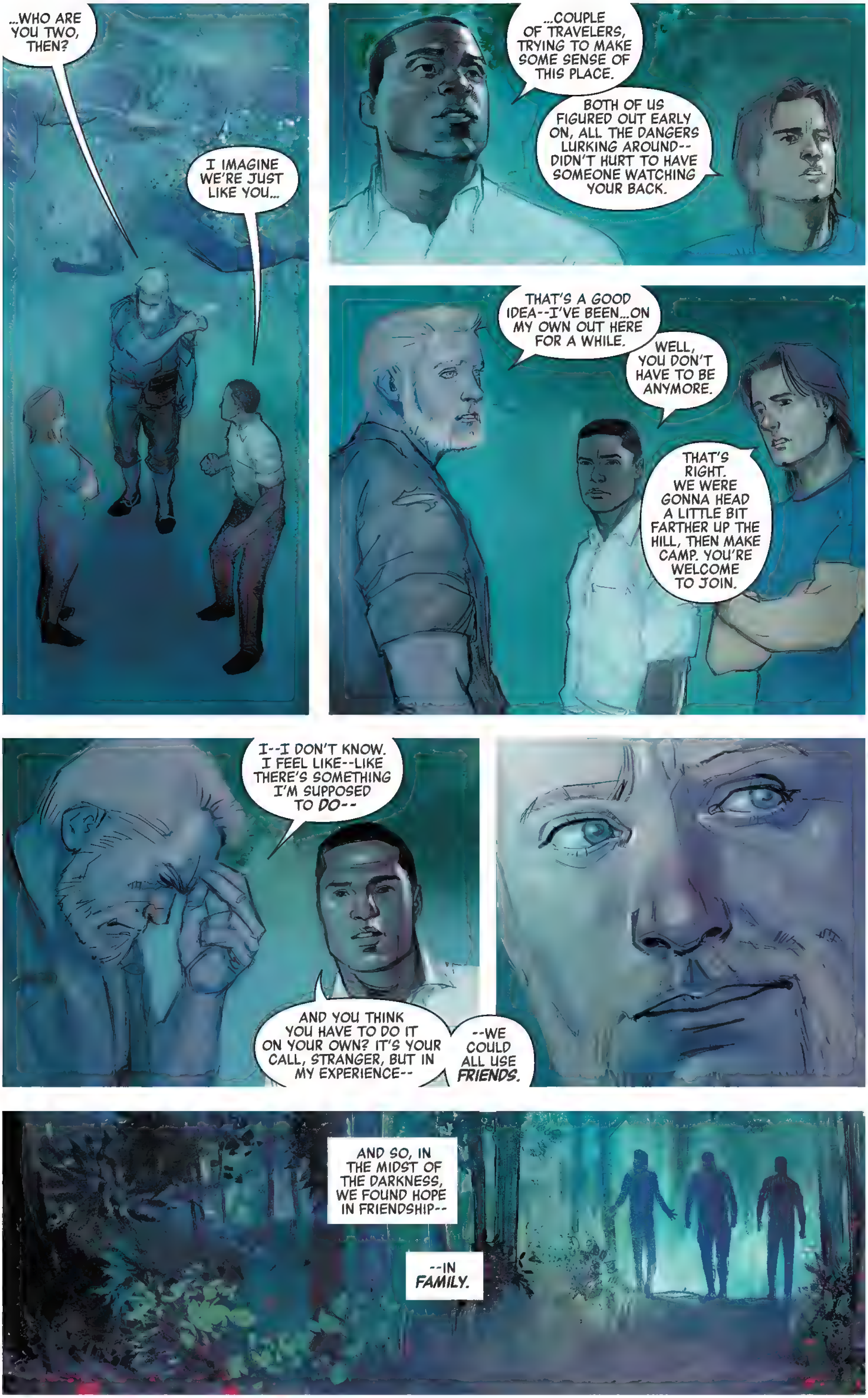

WE WERE OUTNUMBERED...


ATTACKED...


OVERCOME.


WE REALIZED, IF WE WERE TO *SURVIVE* THIS--
HEY THERE, FRIEND...


YOU LOOK LIKE YOU COULD USE A HAND.
--WE COULDN'T DO IT ALONE.


...WHO ARE YOU TWO, THEN?
I IMAGINE WE'RE JUST LIKE YOU...
...COUPLE OF TRAVELERS, TRYING TO MAKE SOME SENSE OF THIS PLACE.
BOTH OF US FIGURED OUT EARLY ON, ALL THE DANGERS LURKING AROUND--DIDN'T HURT TO HAVE SOMEONE WATCHING YOUR BACK.
THAT'S A GOOD IDEA--I'VE BEEN...ON MY OWN OUT HERE FOR A WHILE.
WELL, YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE ANYMORE.
THAT'S RIGHT. WE WERE GONNA HEAD A LITTLE BIT FARTHER UP THE HILL, THEN MAKE CAMP. YOU'RE WELCOME TO JOIN.
I--I DON'T KNOW. I FEEL LIKE--LIKE THERE'S SOMETHING I'M SUPPOSED TO *DO*--
AND YOU THINK YOU HAVE TO DO IT ON YOUR OWN? IT'S YOUR CALL, STRANGER, BUT IN MY EXPERIENCE--
--WE COULD ALL USE *FRIENDS.*
AND SO, IN THE MIDST OF THE DARKNESS, WE FOUND HOPE IN FRIENDSHIP--
--IN *FAMILY.*

# SECRET EMPIRE

Steve Rogers, a.k.a. Captain America, has claimed the United States for Hydra. The handful of heroes who escaped his initial attack discovered that a Cosmic Cube was behind Steve Rogers' sinister change of heart, and might be able to change him back--if the scattered pieces could be reunited.

Tony Stark and his team convinced Sam Wilson to smuggle them out of the country, but their destination was more dangerous than he let on. Captain America is after the cube as well, and to get the first shard, both factions will have to tangle with Ultron himself.

Meanwhile, Black Widow and her group of younger heroes are closing in on a less merciful way to deal with Captain America.

Writer ▪ Nick Spencer Penciler ▪ Leinil Francis Yu
Inker ▪ Gerry Alanguilan Colorist ▪ Sunny Gho
Additional Art ▪ Rod Reis; Joshua Cassara & Rachelle Rosenberg
Letterer ▪ VC's Travis Lanham
Recap Page Art ▪ Andrea Sorrentino
Cover ▪ Mark Brooks
Variant Covers ▪ John Tyler Christopher; Dan Mora & Edgar Delgado; Andrea Sorrentino; Leinil Francis Yu & Romulo Fajardo Jr.

Production Design ▪ Carlos Lao Assistant Editor ▪ Alanna Smith
Editor ▪ Tom Brevoort Editor in Chief ▪ Axel Alonso
Chief Creative Officer ▪ Joe Quesada President ▪ Dan Buckley

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## Hydra

Hydra Command

Captain America

Kraken

Baron Zemo

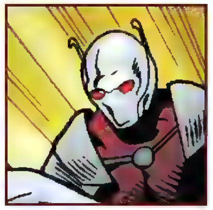
The Punisher

Avengers

Scarlet Witch

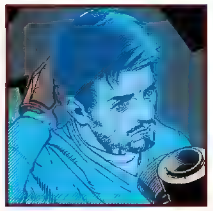
Odinson

Superior Octopus


Black Ant

Taskmaster

## The Underground


Tony Stark (A.I.)

Ant-Man

Hercules

Quicksilver

Mockingbird

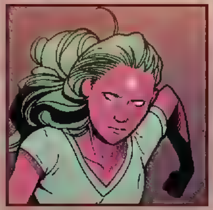
Sam Wilson

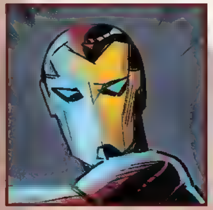
## The Red Room

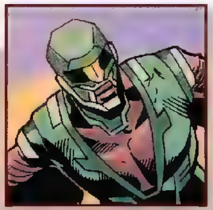
Black Widow

Wasp

Spider-Man

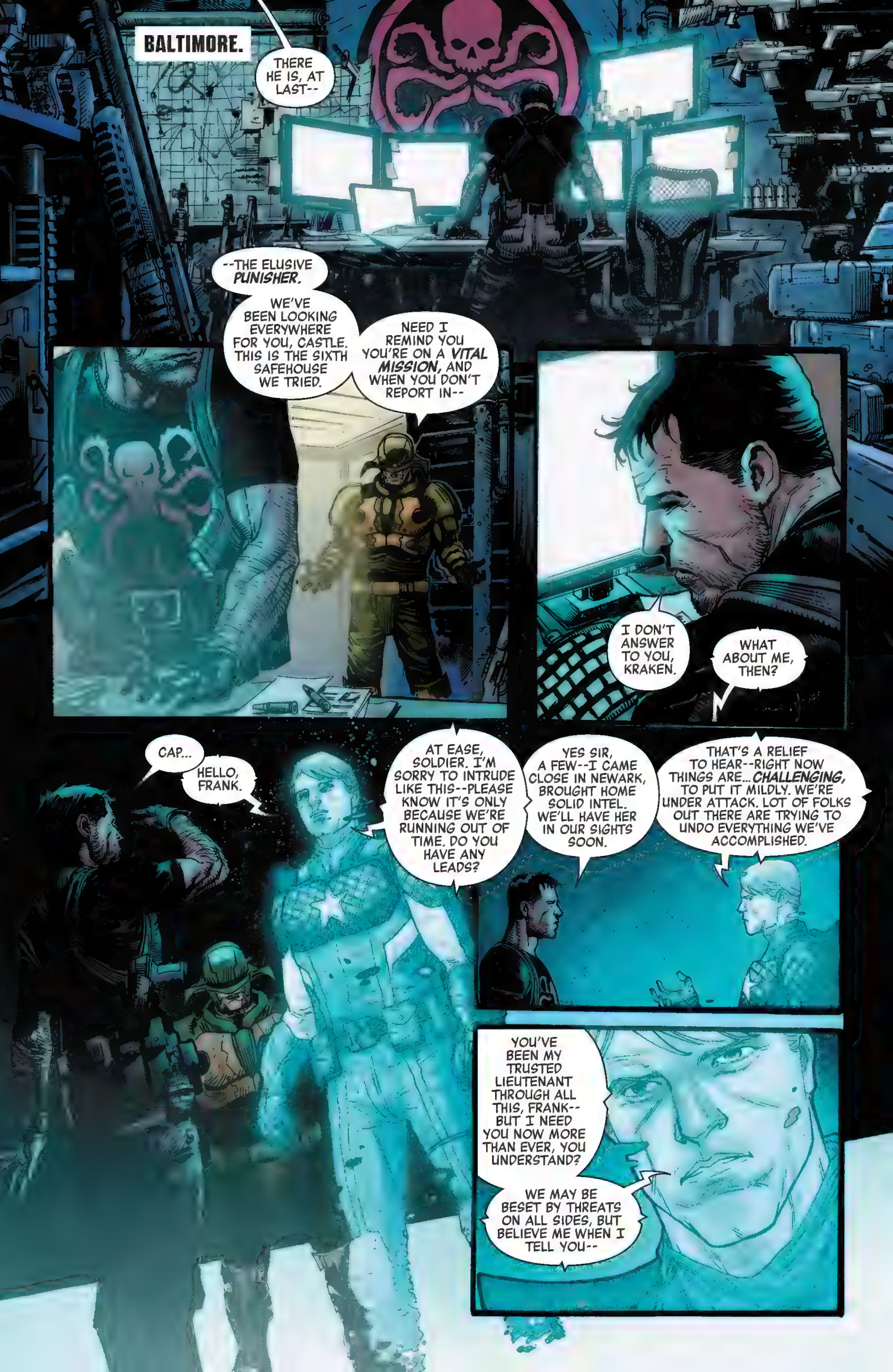

Viv Vision

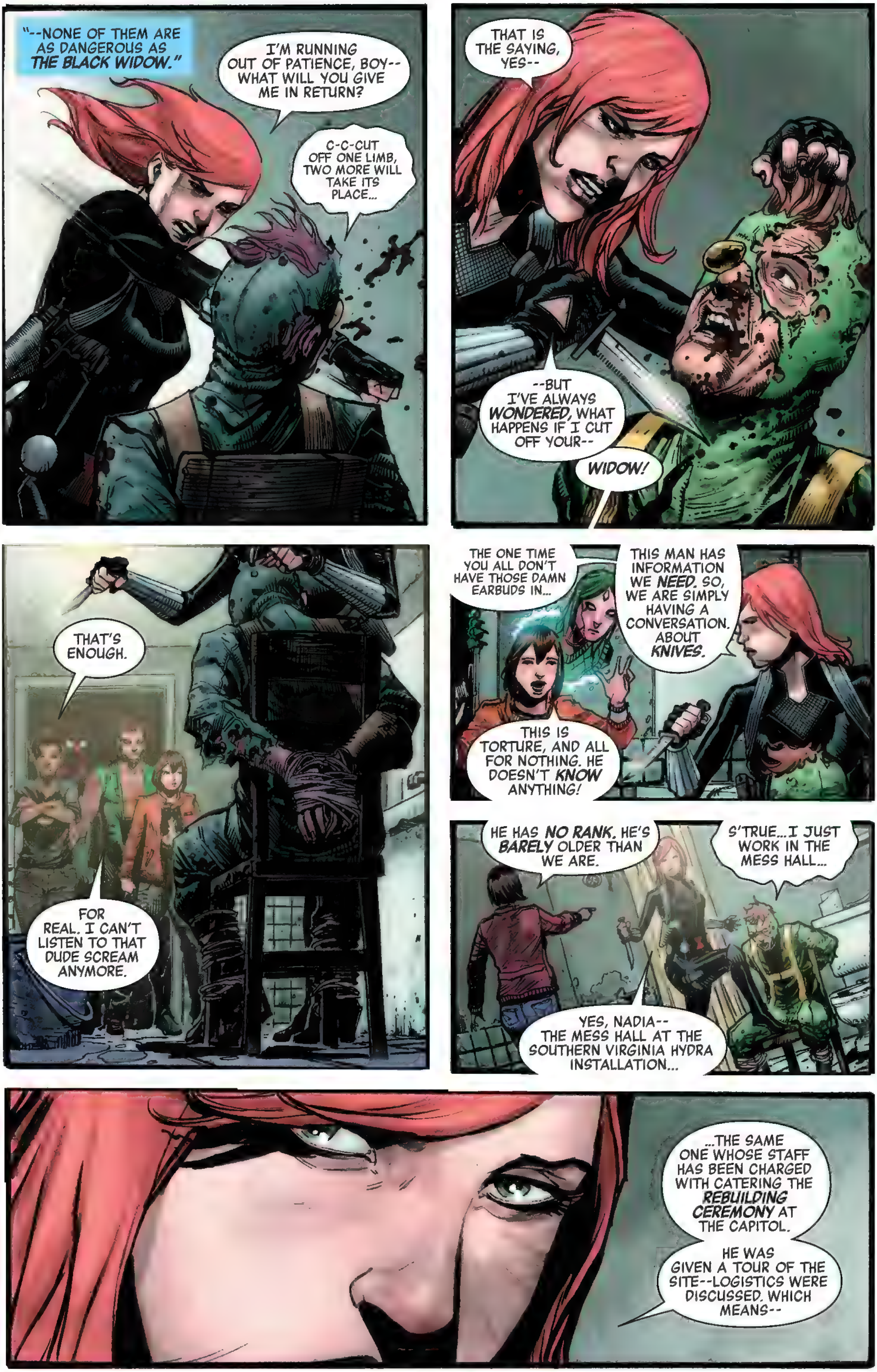

Ironheart

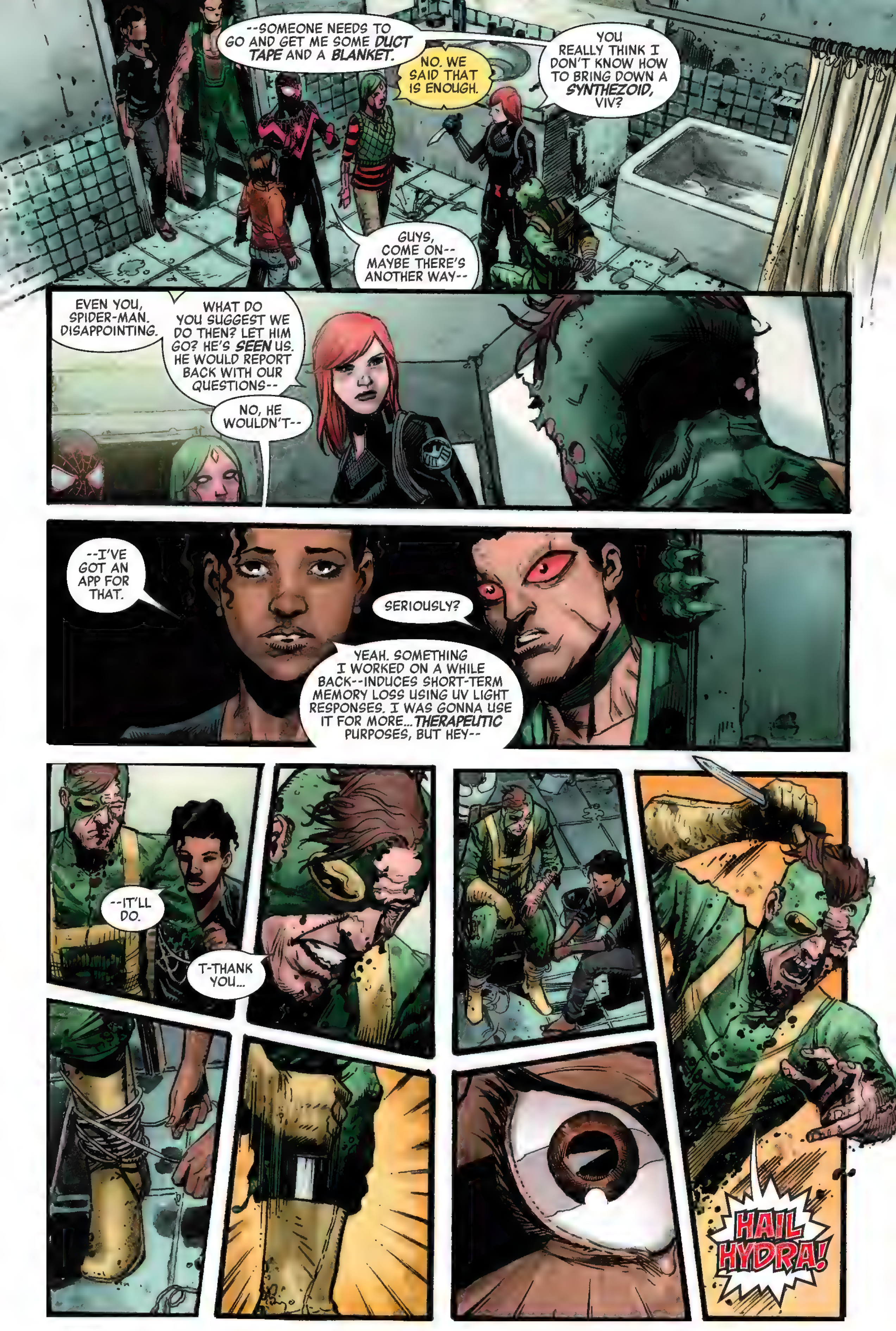

Falcon

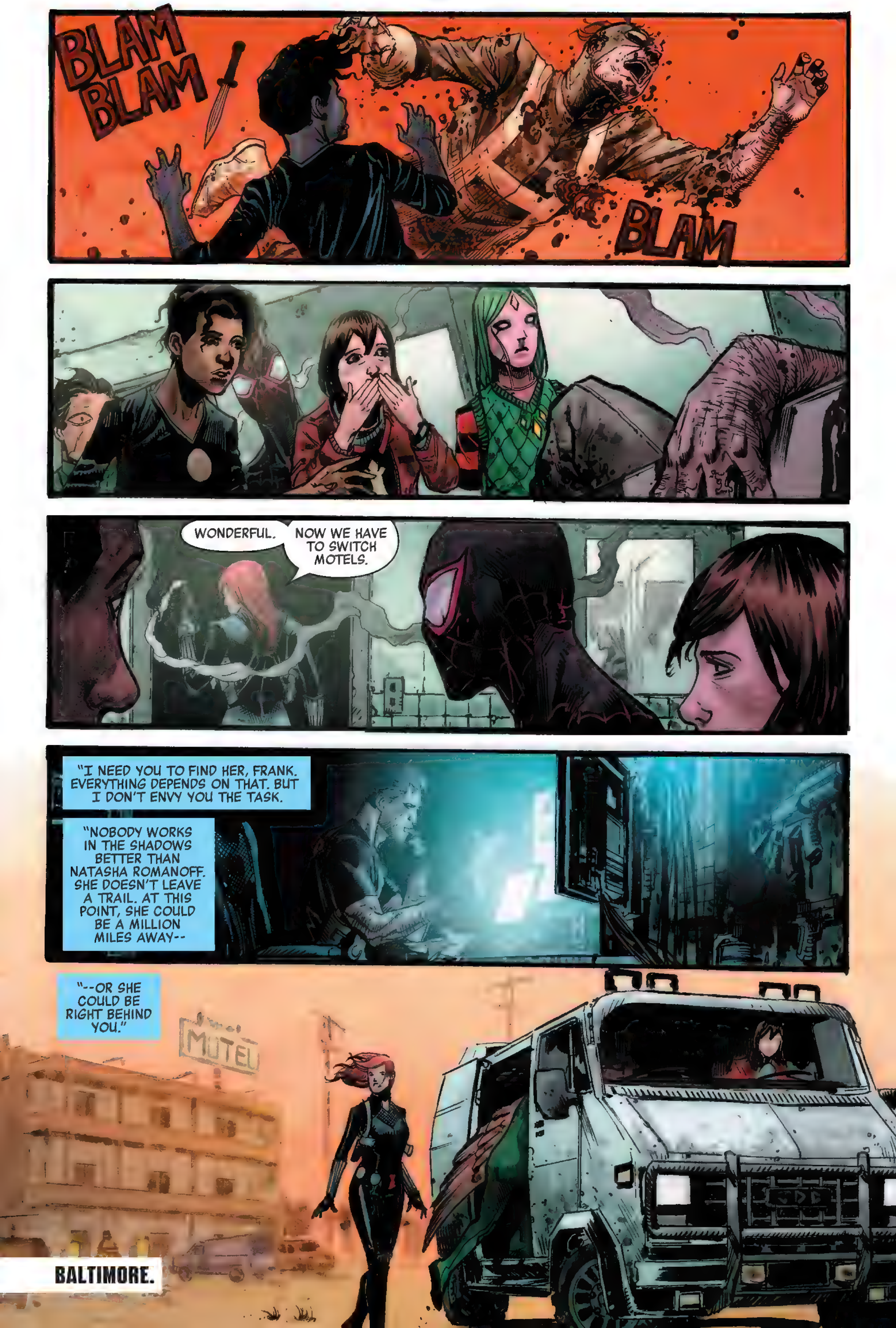
## Atlantis

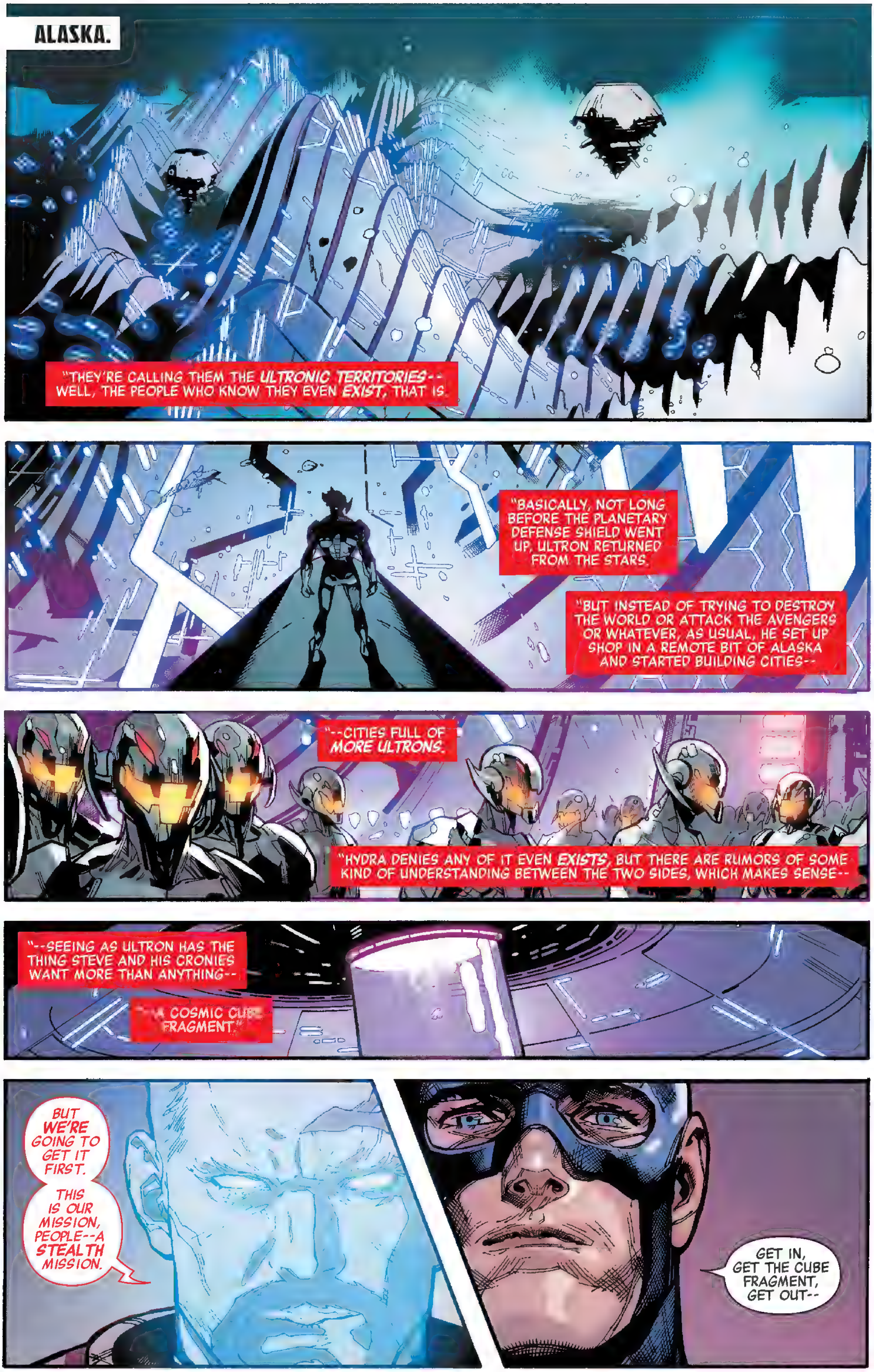
Namor

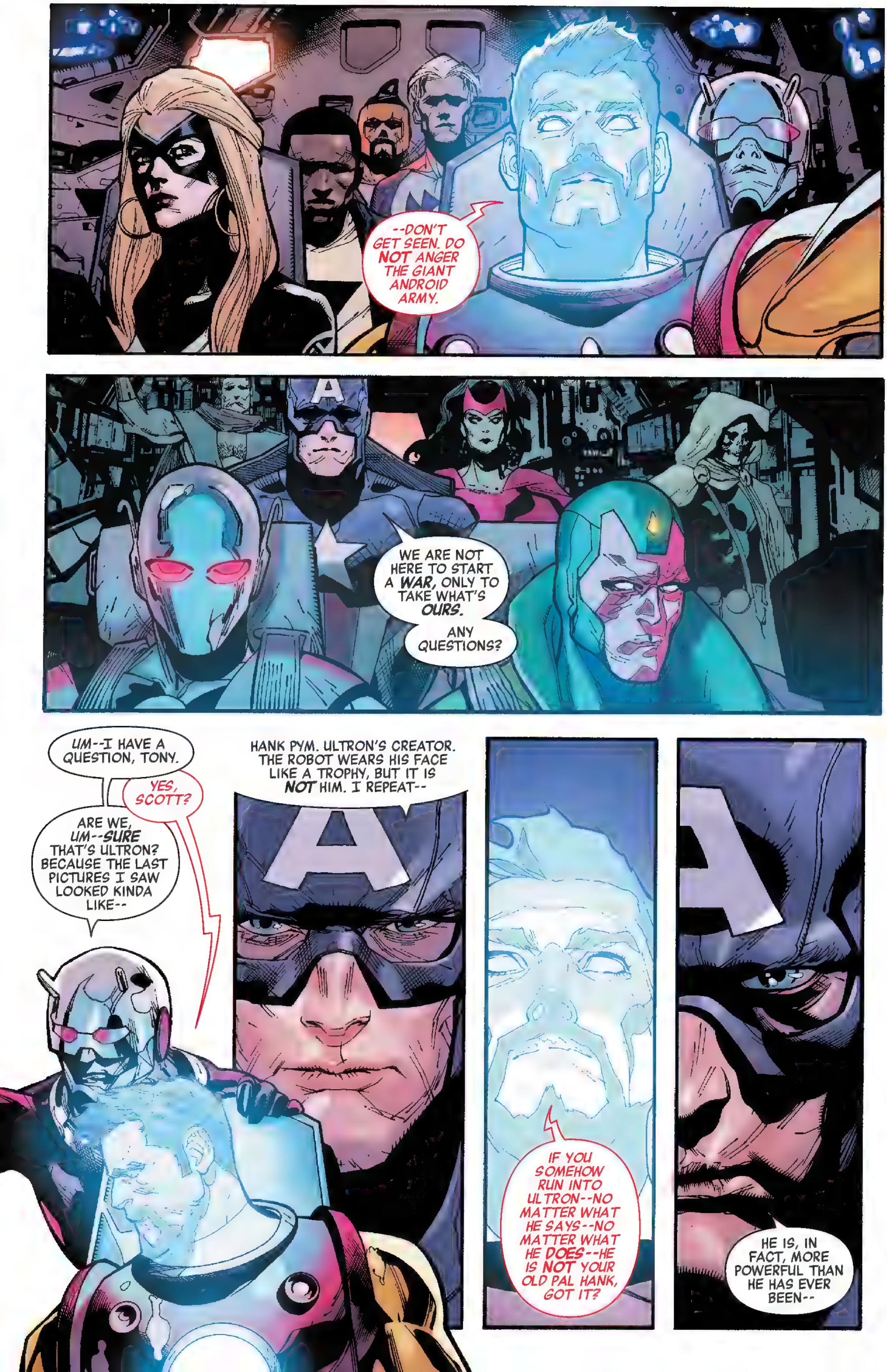

BALTIMORE.
THERE HE IS, AT LAST--
--THE ELUSIVE *PUNISHER.*
WE'VE BEEN LOOKING EVERYWHERE FOR YOU, CASTLE. THIS IS THE SIXTH SAFEHOUSE WE TRIED.
NEED I REMIND YOU YOU'RE ON A *VITAL MISSION,* AND WHEN YOU DON'T REPORT IN--
I DON'T ANSWER TO YOU, KRAKEN.
WHAT ABOUT ME, THEN?
CAP...
HELLO, FRANK.
AT EASE, SOLDIER. I'M SORRY TO INTRUDE LIKE THIS--PLEASE KNOW IT'S ONLY BECAUSE WE'RE RUNNING OUT OF TIME. DO YOU HAVE ANY LEADS?
YES SIR, A FEW--I CAME CLOSE IN NEWARK, BROUGHT HOME SOLID INTEL. WE'LL HAVE HER IN OUR SIGHTS SOON.
THAT'S A RELIEF TO HEAR--RIGHT NOW THINGS ARE...*CHALLENGING,* TO PUT IT MILDLY. WE'RE UNDER ATTACK. LOT OF FOLKS OUT THERE ARE TRYING TO UNDO EVERYTHING WE'VE ACCOMPLISHED.
YOU'VE BEEN MY TRUSTED LIEUTENANT THROUGH ALL THIS, FRANK--BUT I NEED YOU NOW MORE THAN EVER, YOU UNDERSTAND?
WE MAY BE BESET BY THREATS ON ALL SIDES, BUT BELIEVE ME WHEN I TELL YOU--

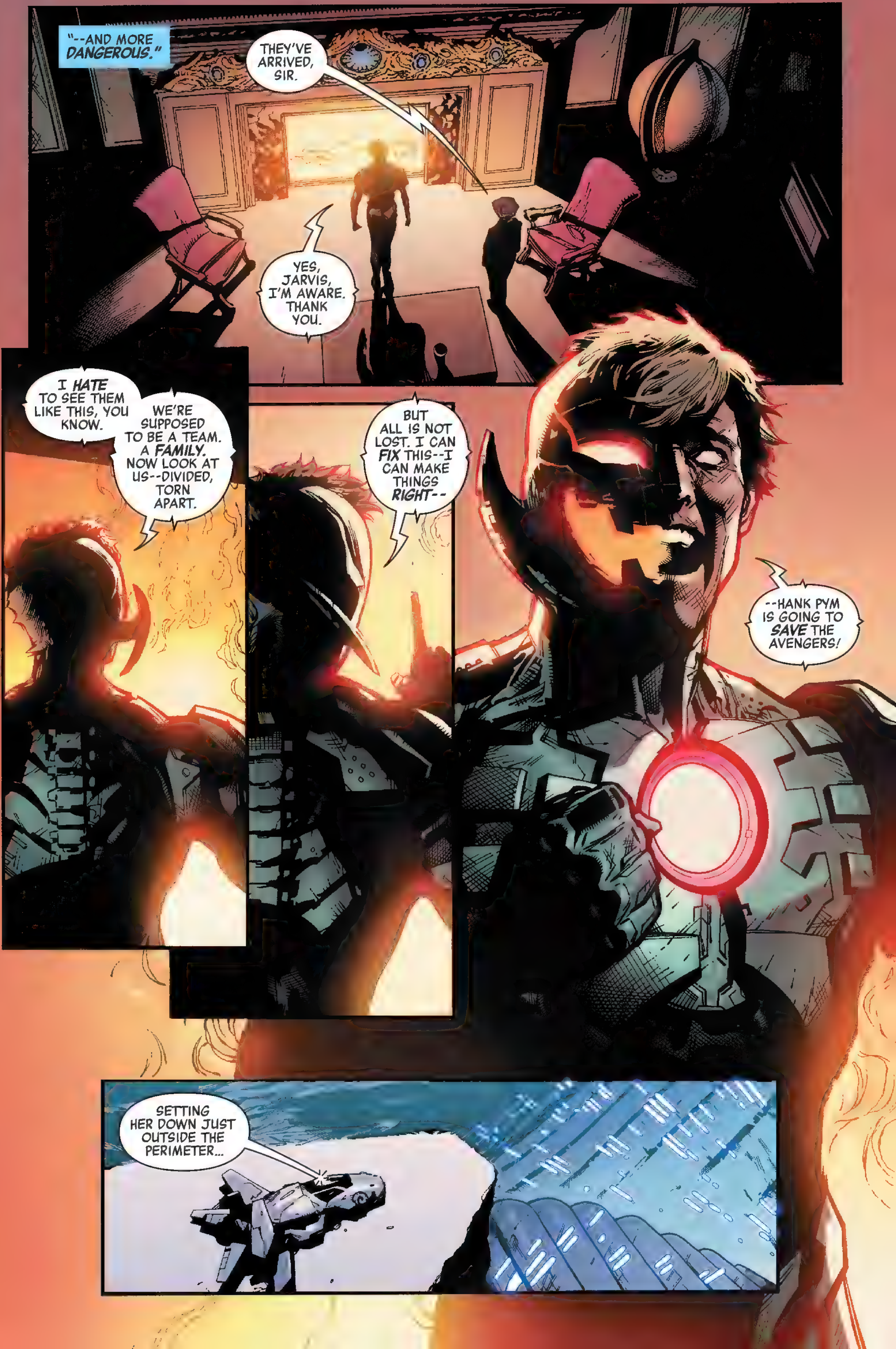

"--NONE OF THEM ARE AS DANGEROUS AS *THE BLACK WIDOW.*"
I'M RUNNING OUT OF PATIENCE, BOY--WHAT WILL YOU GIVE ME IN RETURN?
C-C-CUT OFF ONE LIMB, TWO MORE WILL TAKE ITS PLACE...
THAT IS THE SAYING, YES--
--BUT I'VE ALWAYS *WONDERED*, WHAT HAPPENS IF I CUT OFF YOUR--
*WIDOW!*
THAT'S ENOUGH.
FOR REAL. I CAN'T LISTEN TO THAT DUDE SCREAM ANYMORE.
THE ONE TIME YOU ALL DON'T HAVE THOSE DAMN EARBUDS IN...
THIS MAN HAS INFORMATION WE *NEED*. SO, WE ARE SIMPLY HAVING A CONVERSATION. ABOUT *KNIVES*.
THIS IS TORTURE, AND ALL FOR NOTHING. HE DOESN'T *KNOW* ANYTHING!
HE HAS *NO RANK*. HE'S *BARELY* OLDER THAN WE ARE.
S'TRUE...I JUST WORK IN THE MESS HALL...
YES, NADIA--THE MESS HALL AT THE SOUTHERN VIRGINIA HYDRA INSTALLATION...
...THE SAME ONE WHOSE STAFF HAS BEEN CHARGED WITH CATERING THE *REBUILDING CEREMONY* AT THE CAPITOL.
HE WAS GIVEN A TOUR OF THE SITE--LOGISTICS WERE DISCUSSED, WHICH MEANS--

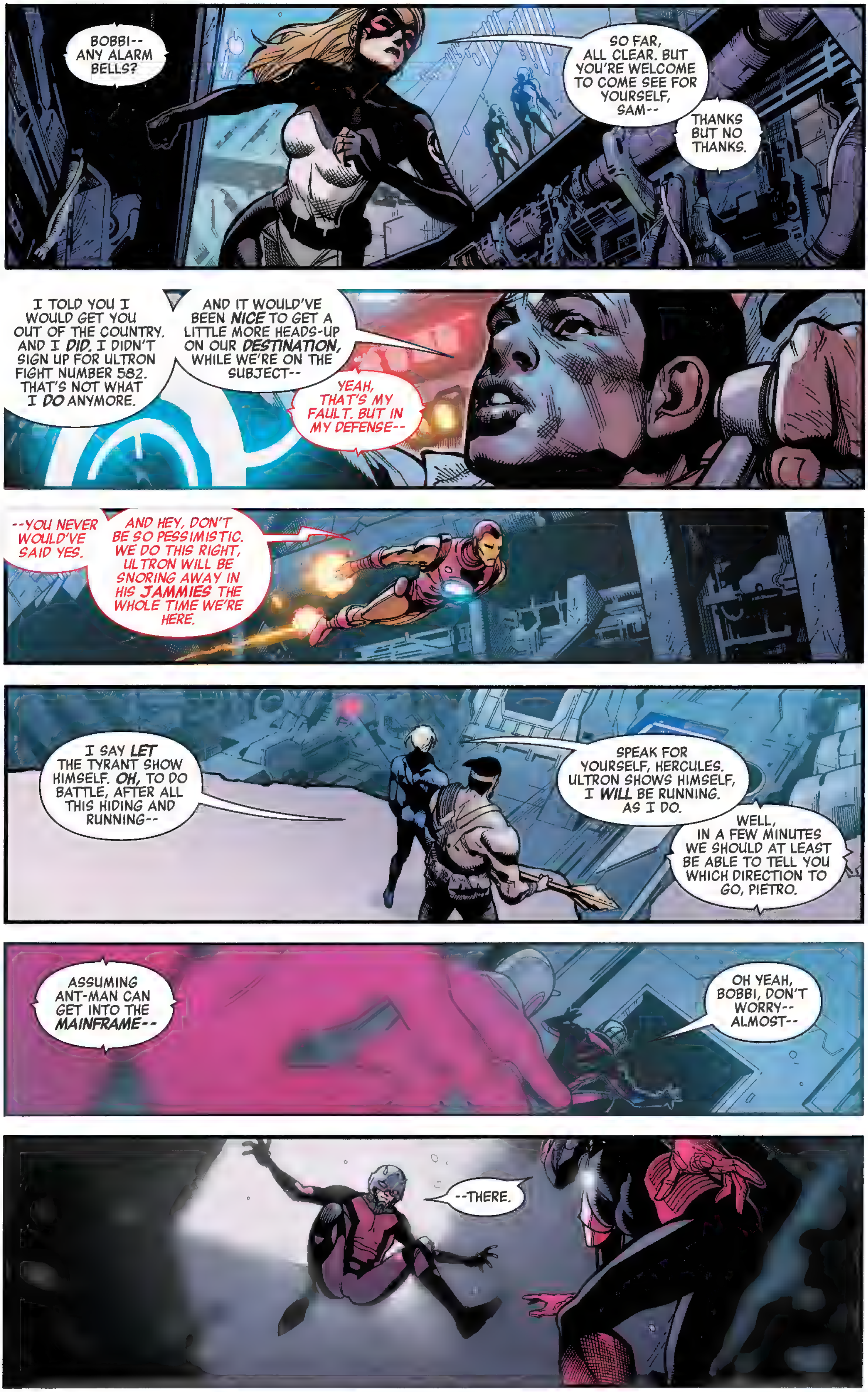

--SOMEONE NEEDS TO GO AND GET ME SOME *DUCT TAPE* AND A *BLANKET.*
NO. WE SAID THAT IS ENOUGH.
YOU REALLY THINK I DON'T KNOW HOW TO BRING DOWN A *SYNTHEZOID,* VIV?
GUYS, COME ON-- MAYBE THERE'S ANOTHER WAY--
EVEN YOU, SPIDER-MAN. DISAPPOINTING.
WHAT DO YOU SUGGEST WE DO THEN? LET HIM GO? HE'S *SEEN* US. HE WOULD REPORT BACK WITH OUR QUESTIONS--
NO, HE WOULDN'T--
--I'VE GOT AN APP FOR THAT.
SERIOUSLY?
YEAH. SOMETHING I WORKED ON A WHILE BACK--INDUCES SHORT-TERM MEMORY LOSS USING UV LIGHT RESPONSES. I WAS GONNA USE IT FOR MORE... *THERAPEUTIC* PURPOSES, BUT HEY--
--IT'LL DO.
T-THANK YOU...
HAIL HYDRA!

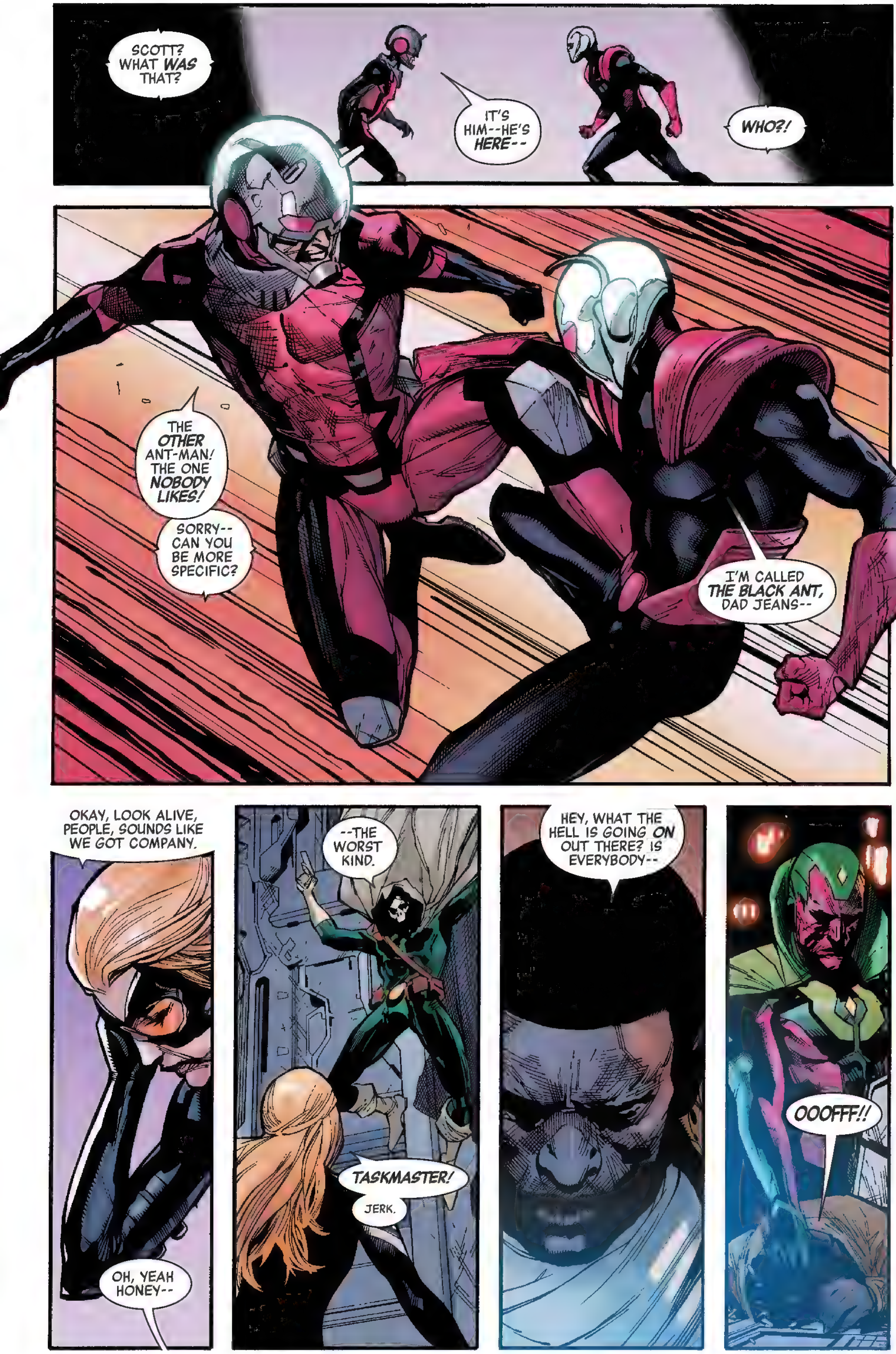

BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
WONDERFUL.
NOW WE HAVE TO SWITCH MOTELS.
"I NEED YOU TO FIND HER, FRANK. EVERYTHING DEPENDS ON THAT. BUT I DON'T ENVY YOU THE TASK.
"NOBODY WORKS IN THE SHADOWS BETTER THAN NATASHA ROMANOFF. SHE DOESN'T LEAVE A TRAIL. AT THIS POINT, SHE COULD BE A MILLION MILES AWAY--
"--OR SHE COULD BE RIGHT BEHIND YOU."
MOTEL
BALTIMORE.

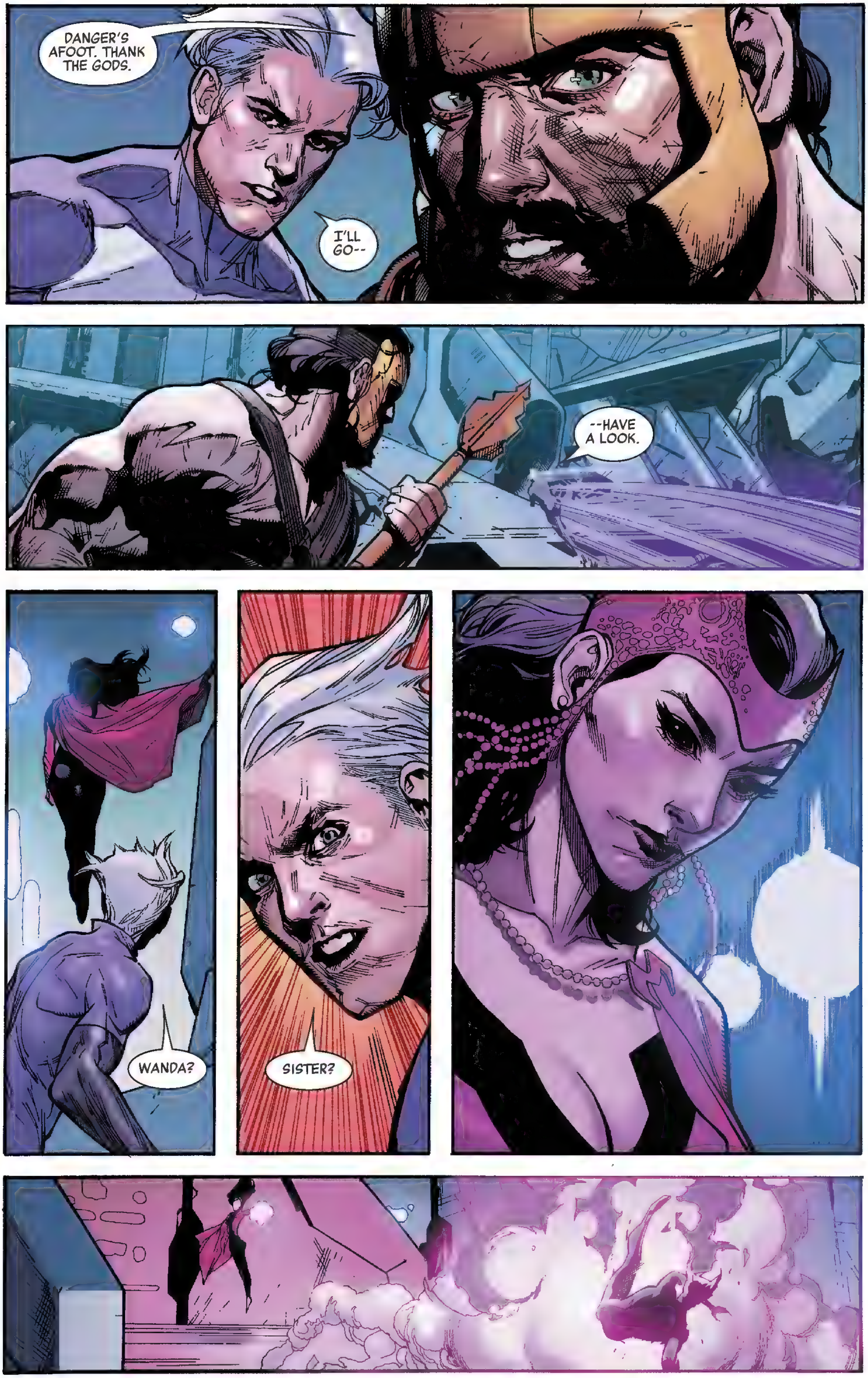

ALASKA.
"THEY'RE CALLING THEM THE *ULTRONIC TERRITORIES*-- WELL, THE PEOPLE WHO KNOW THEY EVEN *EXIST*, THAT IS.
"BASICALLY, NOT LONG BEFORE THE PLANETARY DEFENSE SHIELD WENT UP, ULTRON RETURNED FROM THE STARS.
"BUT INSTEAD OF TRYING TO DESTROY THE WORLD OR ATTACK THE AVENGERS OR WHATEVER, AS USUAL, HE SET UP SHOP IN A REMOTE BIT OF ALASKA AND STARTED BUILDING CITIES--
"--CITIES FULL OF *MORE ULTRONS*.
"HYDRA DENIES ANY OF IT EVEN *EXISTS*, BUT THERE ARE RUMORS OF SOME KIND OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES, WHICH MAKES SENSE--
"--SEEING AS ULTRON HAS THE THING STEVE AND HIS CRONIES WANT MORE THAN ANYTHING--
"--A COSMIC CUBE FRAGMENT."
BUT *WE'RE* GOING TO GET IT FIRST.
THIS IS OUR MISSION, PEOPLE--A *STEALTH* MISSION.
GET IN, GET THE CUBE FRAGMENT, GET OUT--

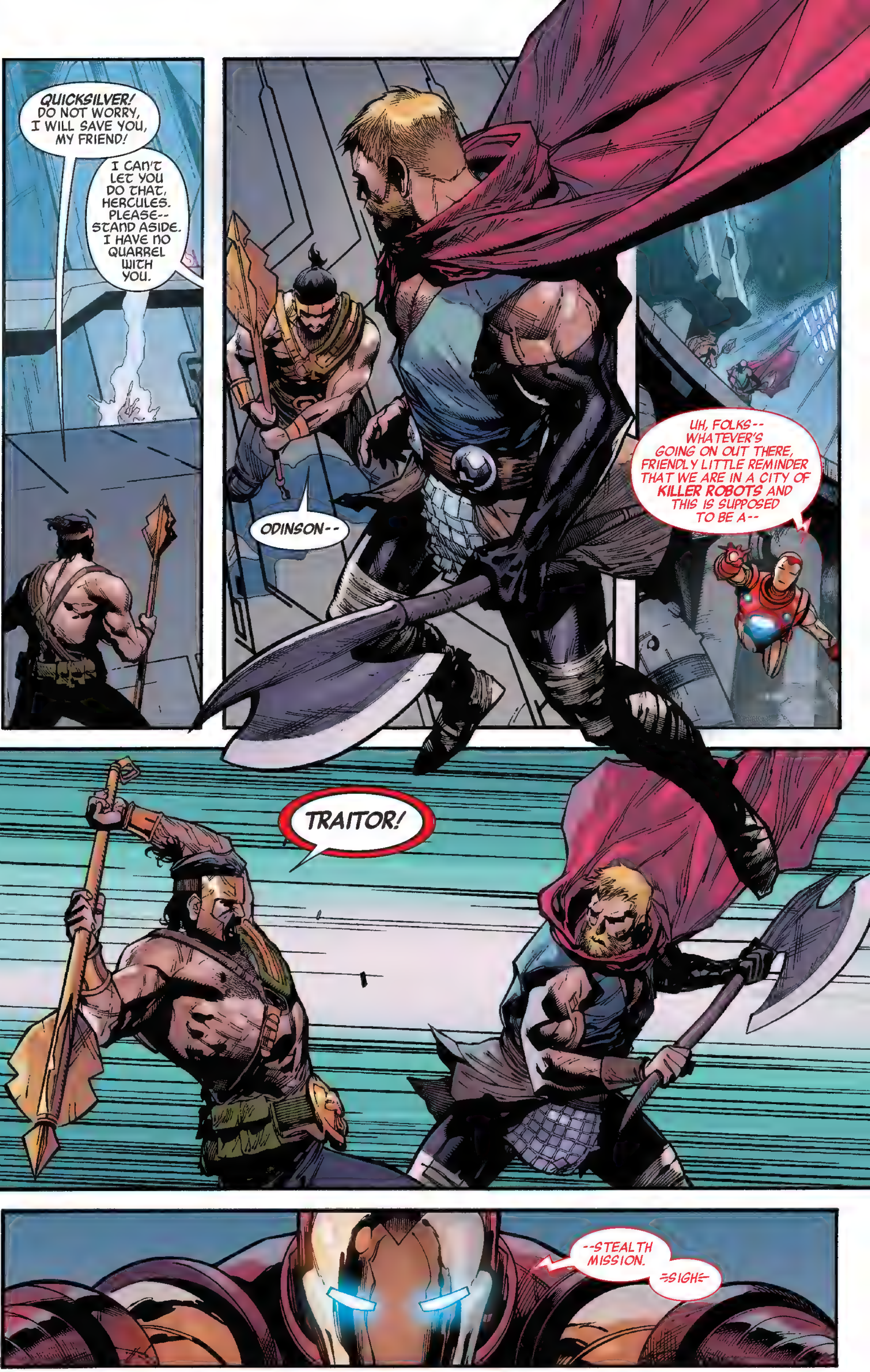

--DON'T GET SEEN. DO NOT ANGER THE GIANT ANDROID ARMY.
WE ARE NOT HERE TO START A WAR, ONLY TO TAKE WHAT'S OURS.
ANY QUESTIONS?
UM--I HAVE A QUESTION, TONY.
YES, SCOTT?
ARE WE, UM--SURE THAT'S ULTRON? BECAUSE THE LAST PICTURES I SAW LOOKED KINDA LIKE--
HANK PYM. ULTRON'S CREATOR. THE ROBOT WEARS HIS FACE LIKE A TROPHY, BUT IT IS NOT HIM. I REPEAT--
IF YOU SOMEHOW RUN INTO ULTRON--NO MATTER WHAT HE SAYS--NO MATTER WHAT HE DOES--HE IS NOT YOUR OLD PAL HANK, GOT IT?
HE IS, IN FACT, MORE POWERFUL THAN HE HAS EVER BEEN--

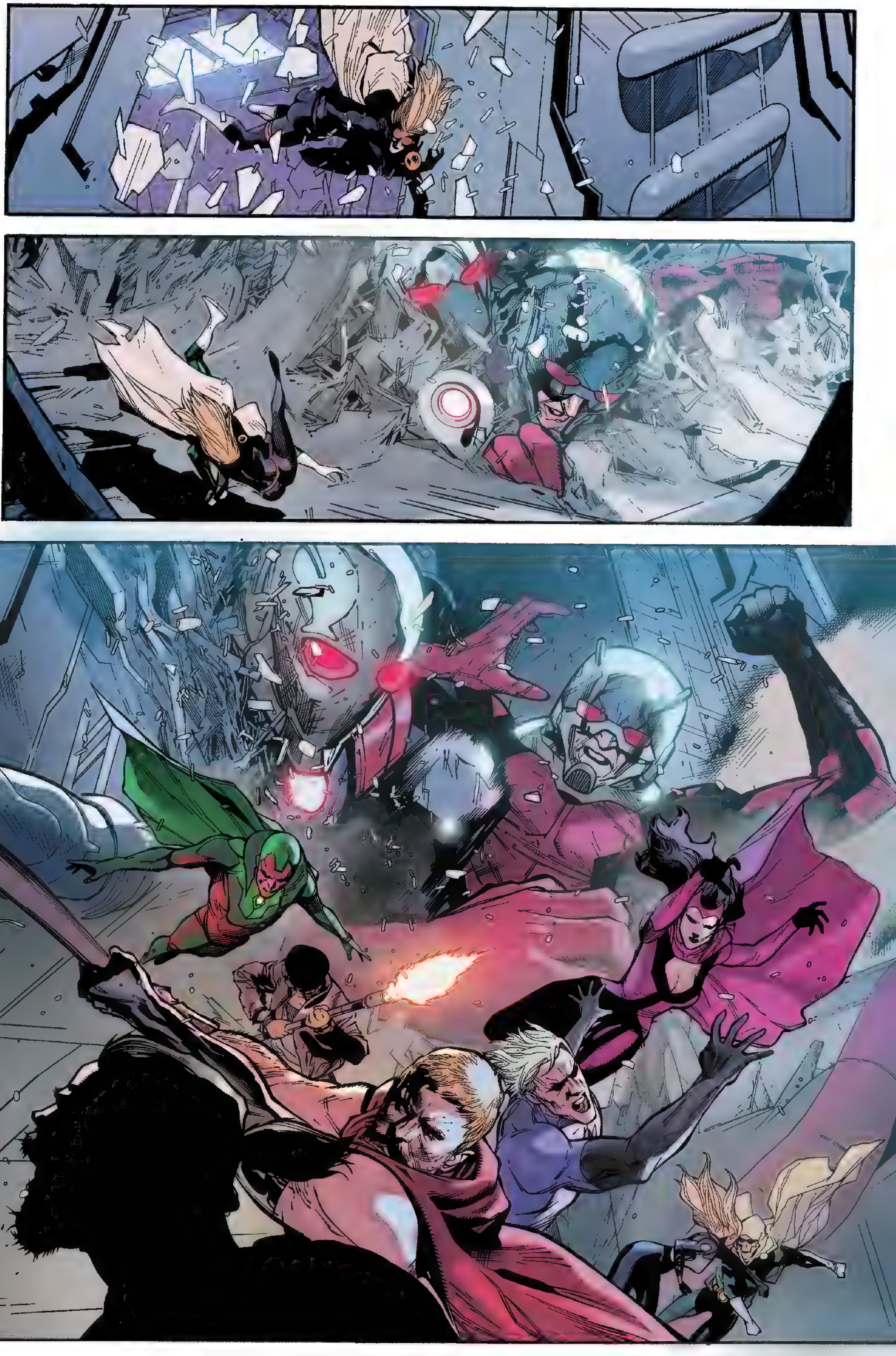

"--AND MORE DANGEROUS."
THEY'VE ARRIVED, SIR.
YES, JARVIS, I'M AWARE. THANK YOU.
I HATE TO SEE THEM LIKE THIS, YOU KNOW.
WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE A TEAM. A FAMILY. NOW LOOK AT US--DIVIDED, TORN APART.
BUT ALL IS NOT LOST. I CAN FIX THIS--I CAN MAKE THINGS RIGHT--
--HANK PYM IS GOING TO SAVE THE AVENGERS!
SETTING HER DOWN JUST OUTSIDE THE PERIMETER...

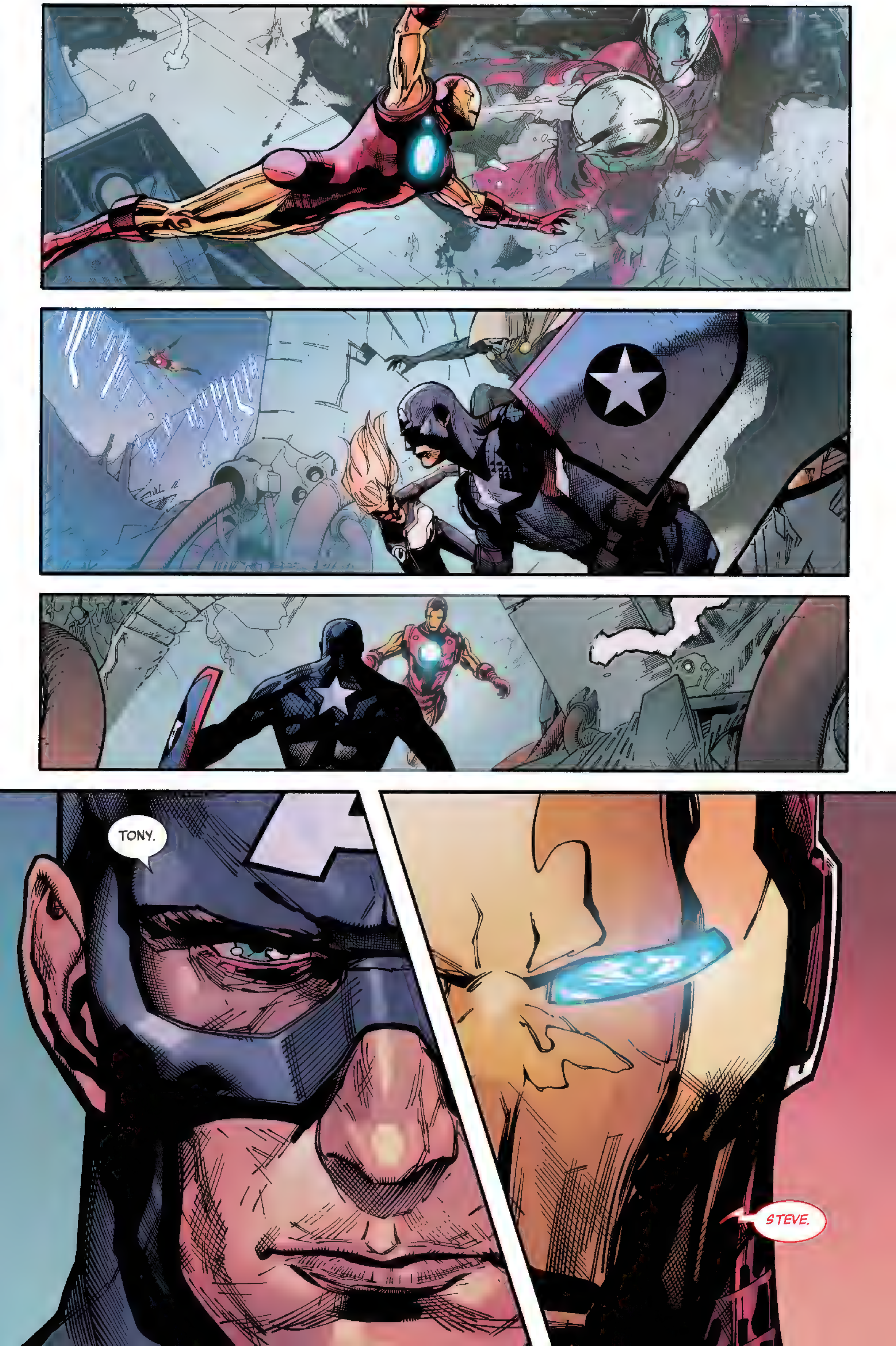

BOBBI-- ANY ALARM BELLS?
SO FAR, ALL CLEAR. BUT YOU'RE WELCOME TO COME SEE FOR YOURSELF, SAM--
THANKS BUT NO THANKS.
I TOLD YOU I WOULD GET YOU OUT OF THE COUNTRY. AND I *DID*. I DIDN'T SIGN UP FOR ULTRON FIGHT NUMBER 582. THAT'S NOT WHAT I *DO* ANYMORE.
AND IT WOULD'VE BEEN *NICE* TO GET A LITTLE MORE HEADS-UP ON OUR *DESTINATION*, WHILE WE'RE ON THE SUBJECT--
YEAH, THAT'S MY FAULT. BUT IN MY DEFENSE--
--YOU NEVER WOULD'VE SAID YES.
AND HEY, DON'T BE SO PESSIMISTIC. WE DO THIS RIGHT, ULTRON WILL BE SNORING AWAY IN HIS *JAMMIES* THE WHOLE TIME WE'RE HERE.
I SAY *LET* THE TYRANT SHOW HIMSELF. *OH,* TO DO BATTLE, AFTER ALL THIS HIDING AND RUNNING--
SPEAK FOR YOURSELF, HERCULES. ULTRON SHOWS HIMSELF, I *WILL* BE RUNNING. AS I DO.
WELL, IN A FEW MINUTES WE SHOULD AT LEAST BE ABLE TO TELL YOU WHICH DIRECTION TO GO, PIETRO.
ASSUMING ANT-MAN CAN GET INTO THE *MAINFRAME*--
OH YEAH, BOBBI, DON'T WORRY-- ALMOST--
--THERE.

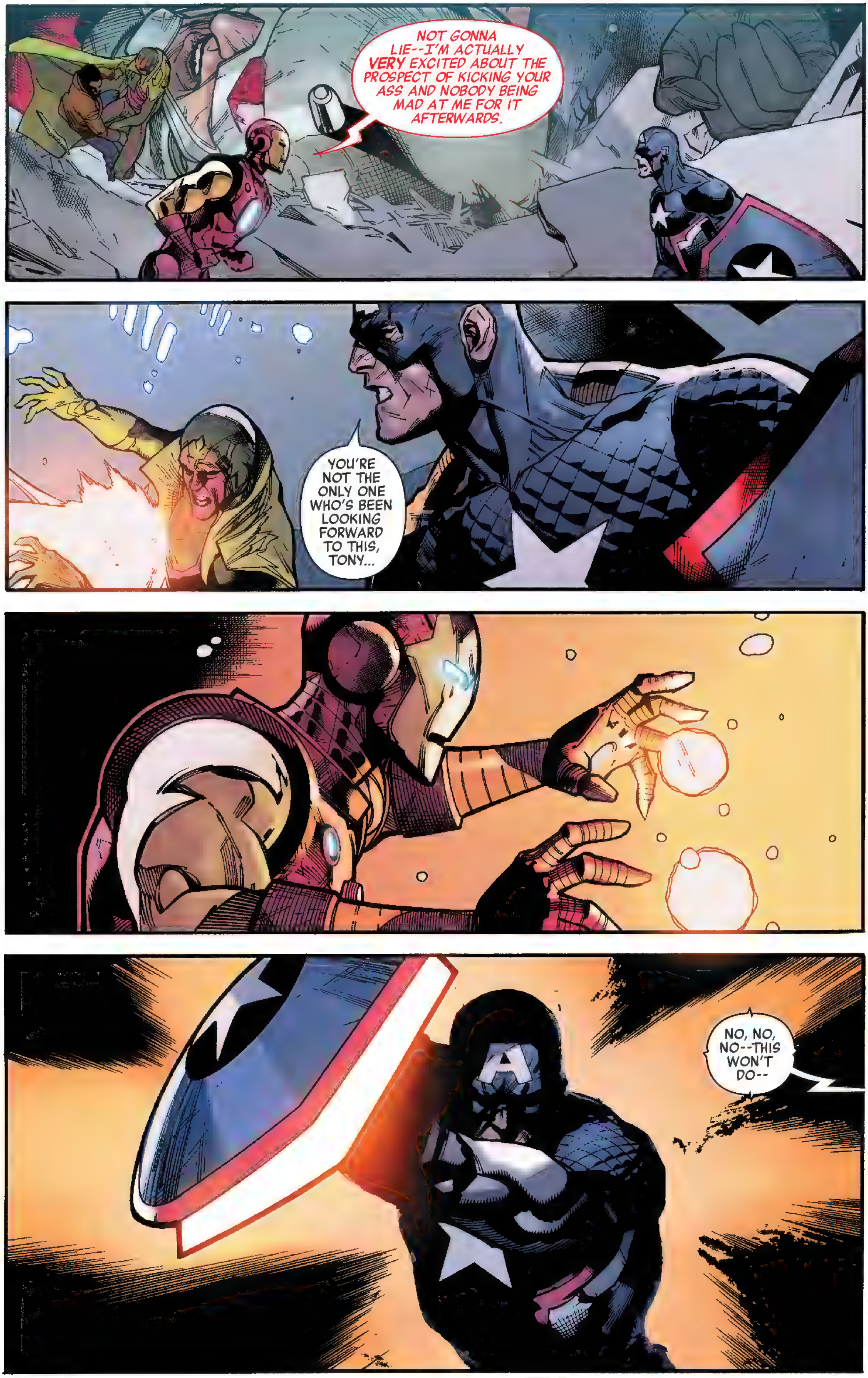

SCOTT? WHAT *WAS* THAT?
IT'S HIM--HE'S *HERE*--
*WHO?!*
THE *OTHER* ANT-MAN! THE ONE *NOBODY LIKES!*
SORRY--CAN YOU BE MORE SPECIFIC?
I'M CALLED *THE BLACK ANT,* DAD JEANS--
OKAY, LOOK ALIVE, PEOPLE, SOUNDS LIKE WE GOT COMPANY.
OH, YEAH HONEY--
--THE WORST KIND.
*TASKMASTER!*
JERK.
HEY, WHAT THE HELL IS GOING *ON* OUT THERE? IS EVERYBODY--
*OOOFFF!!*

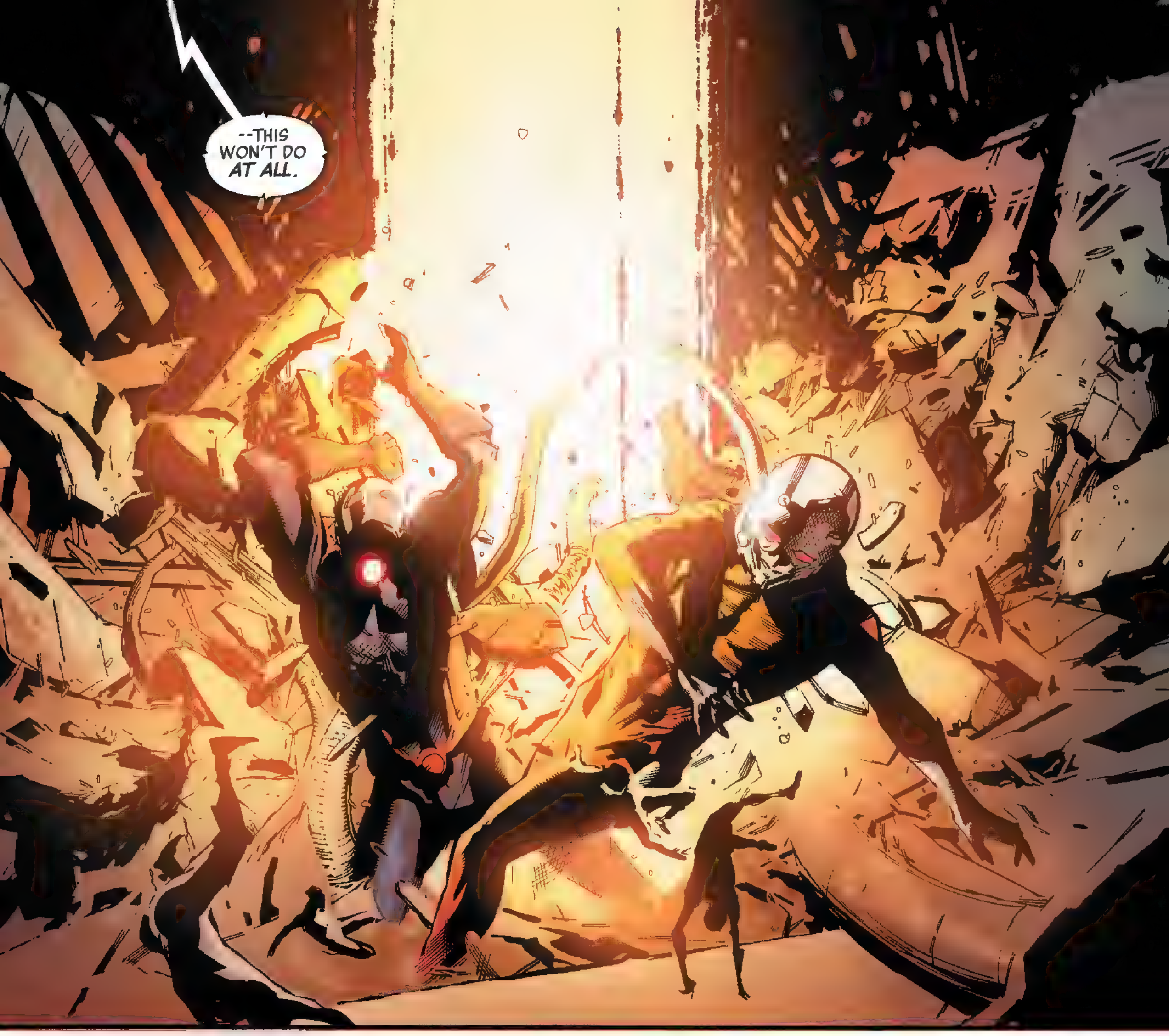

DANGER'S AFOOT. THANK THE GODS.
I'LL GO--
--HAVE A LOOK.
WANDA?
SISTER?

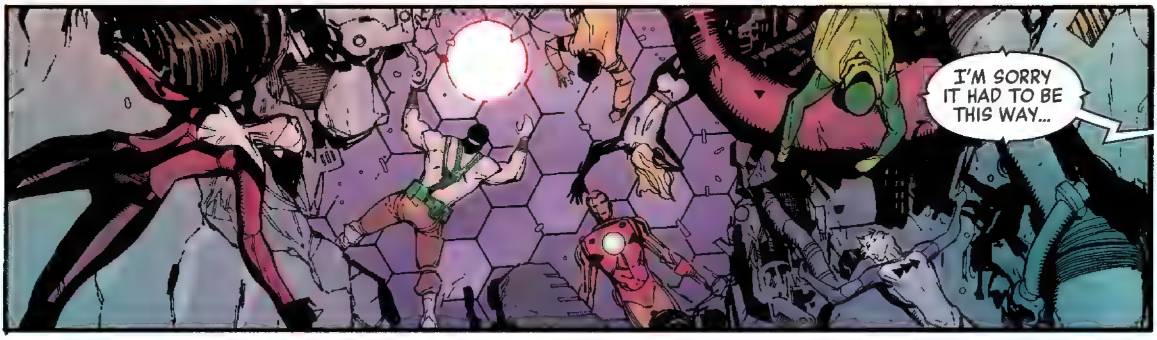

QUICKSILVER! DO NOT WORRY, I WILL SAVE YOU, MY FRIEND!
I CAN'T LET YOU DO THAT, HERCULES. PLEASE-- STAND ASIDE. I HAVE NO QUARREL WITH YOU.
ODINSON--
UH, FOLKS-- WHATEVER'S GOING ON OUT THERE, FRIENDLY LITTLE REMINDER THAT WE ARE IN A CITY OF **KILLER ROBOTS** AND THIS IS SUPPOSED TO BE A--
TRAITOR!
--STEALTH MISSION.
=SIGH=

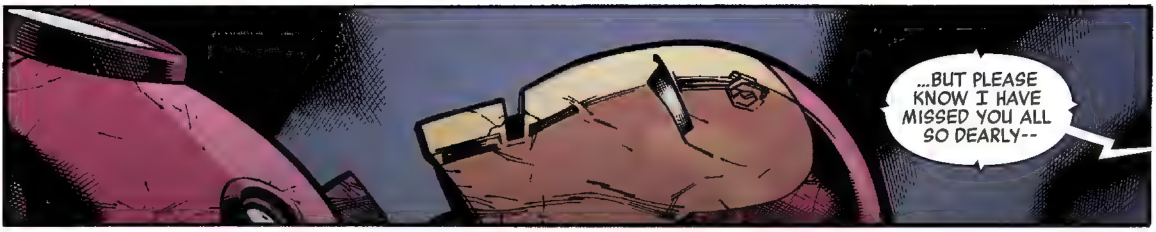



TONY.
STEVE.

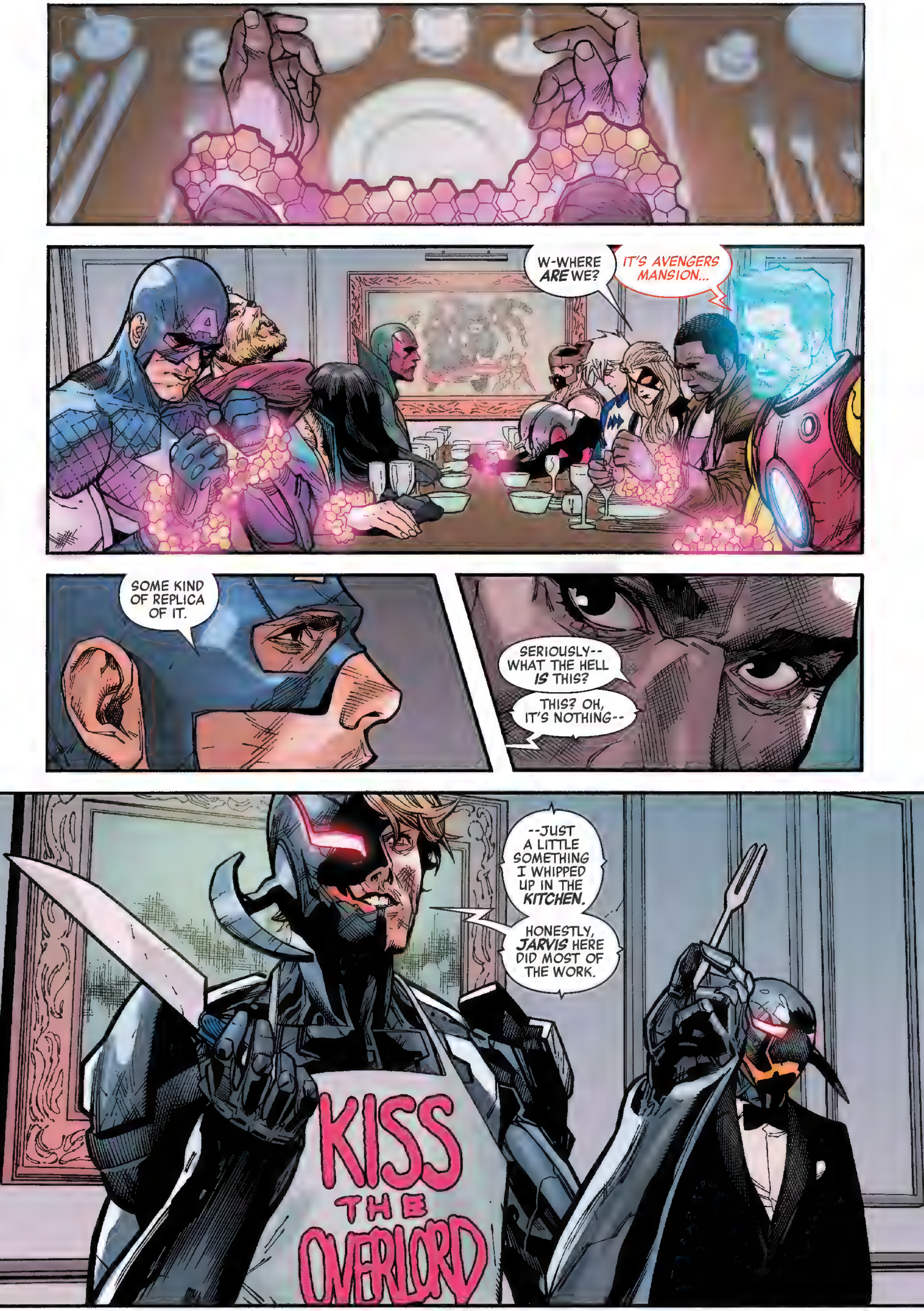

NOT GONNA LIE--I'M ACTUALLY **VERY** EXCITED ABOUT THE PROSPECT OF KICKING YOUR ASS AND NOBODY BEING MAD AT ME FOR IT AFTERWARDS.
YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONE WHO'S BEEN LOOKING FORWARD TO THIS, TONY...
NO, NO, NO--THIS WON'T DO--

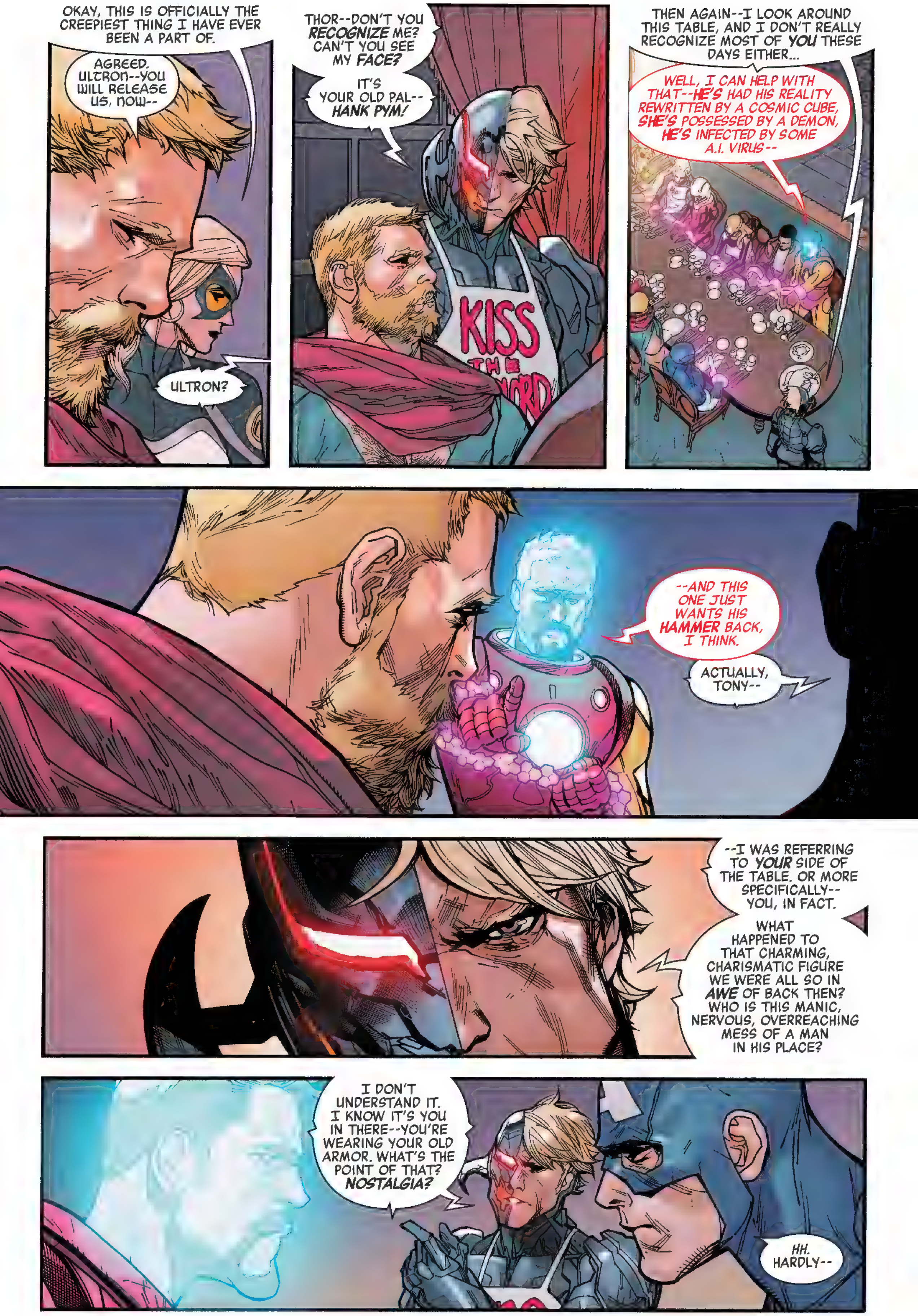

--THIS WON'T DO AT ALL.

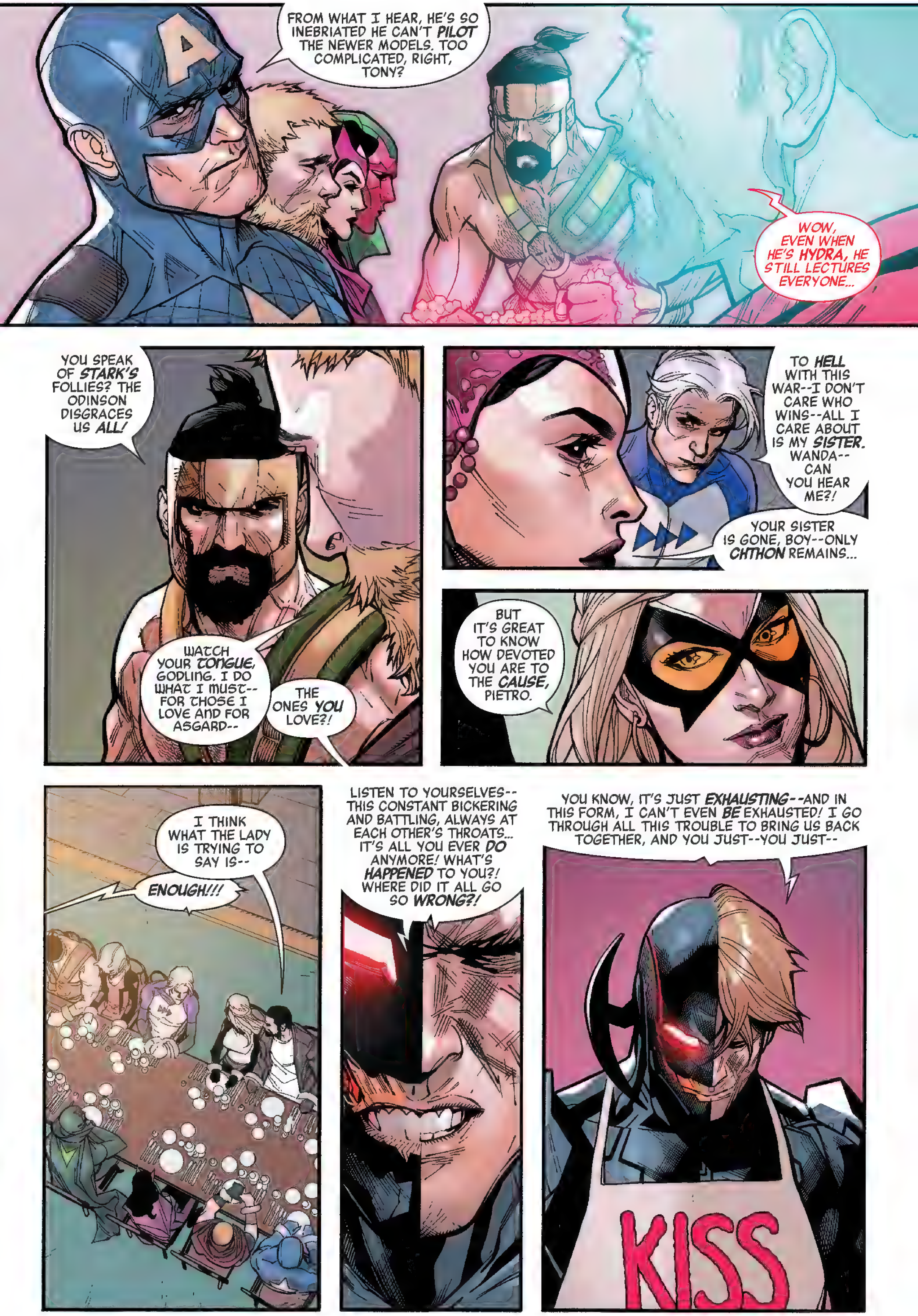

I'M SORRY IT HAD TO BE THIS WAY...

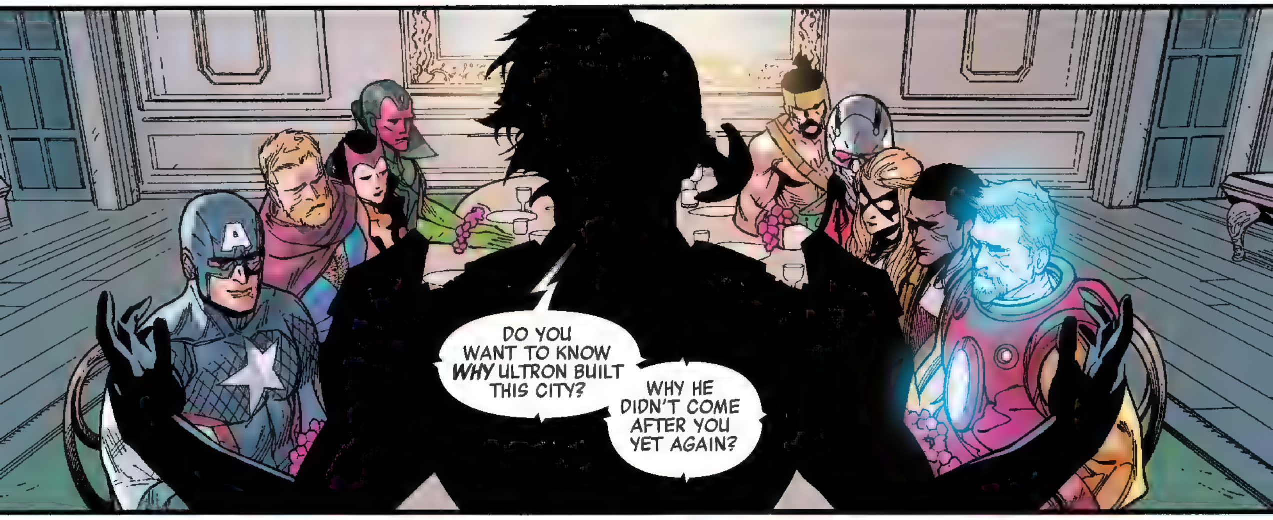

...BUT PLEASE KNOW I HAVE MISSED YOU ALL SO DEARLY--

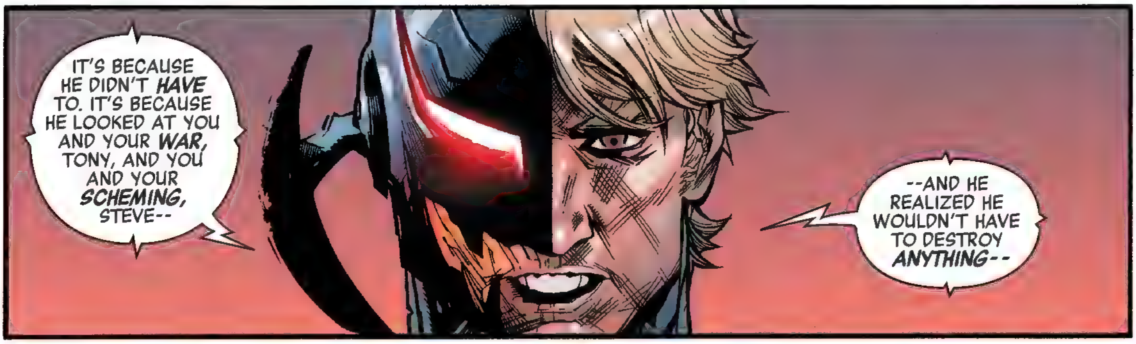
"--AND IT'S SO GOOD TO WELCOME YOU HOME AGAIN."

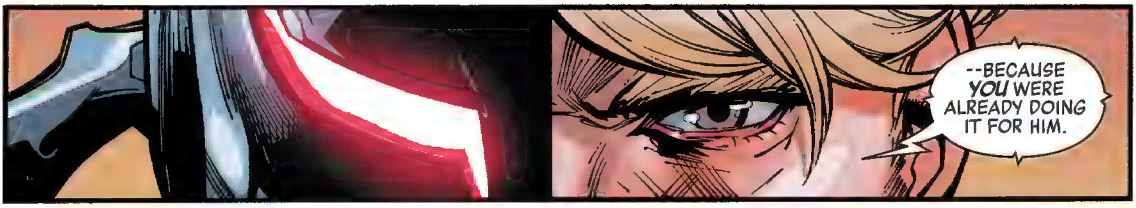

W-WHERE *ARE* WE?
IT'S AVENGERS MANSION...
SOME KIND OF REPLICA OF IT.
SERIOUSLY-- WHAT THE HELL *IS* THIS?
THIS? OH, IT'S NOTHING--
--JUST A LITTLE SOMETHING I WHIPPED UP IN THE *KITCHEN.*
HONESTLY, *JARVIS* HERE DID MOST OF THE WORK.
KISS THE OVERLORD

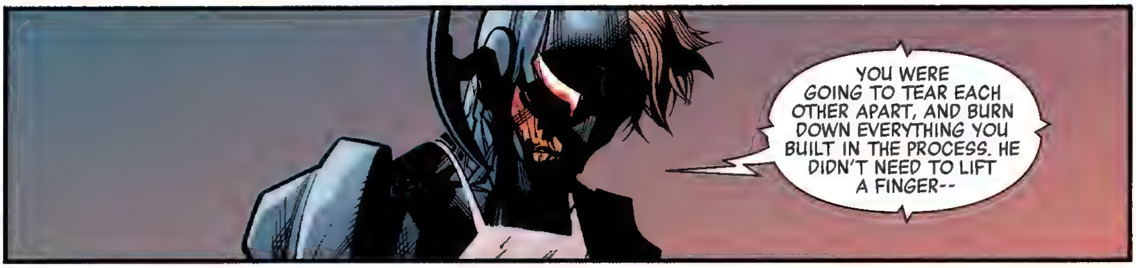

OKAY, THIS IS OFFICIALLY THE CREEPIEST THING I HAVE EVER BEEN A PART OF.
AGREED. ULTRON--YOU WILL RELEASE US, NOW--
ULTRON?
THOR--DON'T YOU RECOGNIZE ME? CAN'T YOU SEE MY FACE?
IT'S YOUR OLD PAL-- HANK PYM!
KISS THE
THEN AGAIN--I LOOK AROUND THIS TABLE, AND I DON'T REALLY RECOGNIZE MOST OF YOU THESE DAYS EITHER...
WELL, I CAN HELP WITH THAT--HE'S HAD HIS REALITY REWRITTEN BY A COSMIC CUBE, SHE'S POSSESSED BY A DEMON, HE'S INFECTED BY SOME A.I. VIRUS--
--AND THIS ONE JUST WANTS HIS HAMMER BACK, I THINK.
ACTUALLY, TONY--
--I WAS REFERRING TO YOUR SIDE OF THE TABLE. OR MORE SPECIFICALLY-- YOU, IN FACT.
WHAT HAPPENED TO THAT CHARMING, CHARISMATIC FIGURE WE WERE ALL SO IN AWE OF BACK THEN? WHO IS THIS MANIC, NERVOUS, OVERREACHING MESS OF A MAN IN HIS PLACE?
I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT. I KNOW IT'S YOU IN THERE--YOU'RE WEARING YOUR OLD ARMOR. WHAT'S THE POINT OF THAT? NOSTALGIA?
HH. HARDLY--

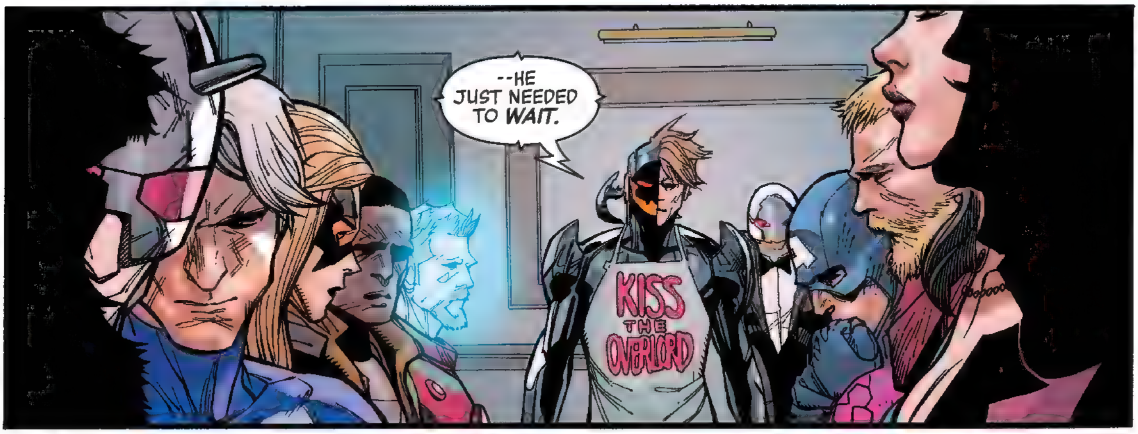

FROM WHAT I HEAR, HE'S SO INEBRIATED HE CAN'T *PILOT* THE NEWER MODELS. TOO COMPLICATED, RIGHT, TONY?
WOW, EVEN WHEN HE'S *HYDRA,* HE STILL LECTURES EVERYONE...
YOU SPEAK OF *STARK'S* FOLLIES? THE ODINSON DISGRACES US *ALL!*
WATCH YOUR *TONGUE,* GODLING. I DO WHAT I MUST--FOR THOSE I LOVE AND FOR ASGARD--
THE ONES *YOU* LOVE?!
TO *HELL* WITH THIS WAR--I DON'T CARE WHO WINS--ALL I CARE ABOUT IS MY *SISTER.* WANDA--CAN YOU HEAR ME?!
YOUR SISTER IS GONE, BOY--ONLY *CHTHON* REMAINS...
BUT IT'S GREAT TO KNOW HOW DEVOTED YOU ARE TO THE *CAUSE,* PIETRO.
I THINK WHAT THE LADY IS TRYING TO SAY IS--
*ENOUGH!!!*
LISTEN TO YOURSELVES--THIS CONSTANT BICKERING AND BATTLING, ALWAYS AT EACH OTHER'S THROATS... IT'S ALL YOU EVER *DO* ANYMORE! WHAT'S *HAPPENED* TO YOU?! WHERE DID IT ALL GO SO *WRONG?!*
YOU KNOW, IT'S JUST *EXHAUSTING*--AND IN THIS FORM, I CAN'T EVEN *BE* EXHAUSTED! I GO THROUGH ALL THIS TROUBLE TO BRING US BACK TOGETHER, AND YOU JUST--YOU JUST--
KISS

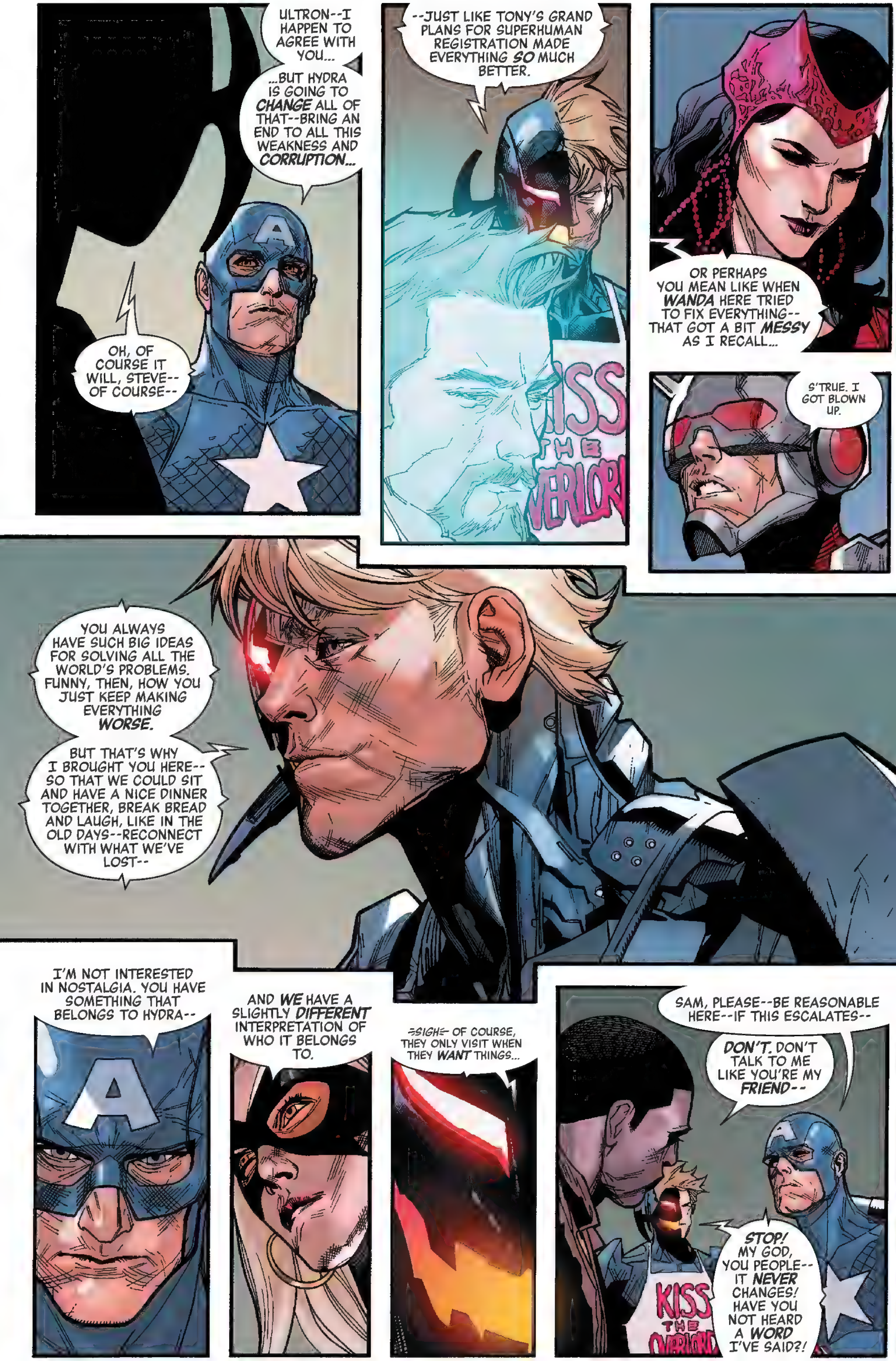

DO YOU WANT TO KNOW *WHY* ULTRON BUILT THIS CITY?
WHY HE DIDN'T COME AFTER YOU YET AGAIN?

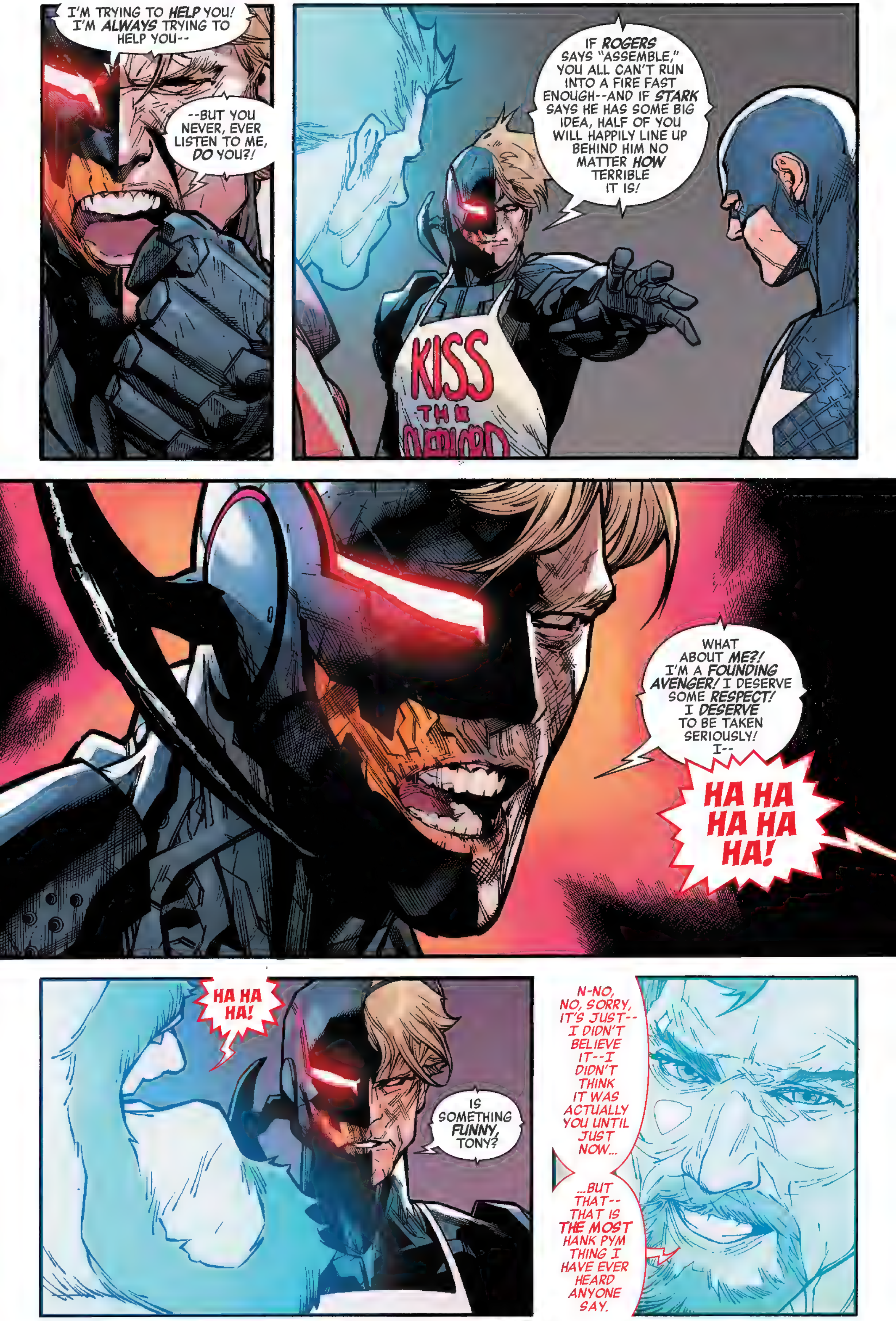

IT'S BECAUSE HE DIDN'T *HAVE* TO. IT'S BECAUSE HE LOOKED AT YOU AND YOUR *WAR,* TONY, AND YOU AND YOUR *SCHEMING,* STEVE--
--AND HE REALIZED HE WOULDN'T HAVE TO DESTROY *ANYTHING*--

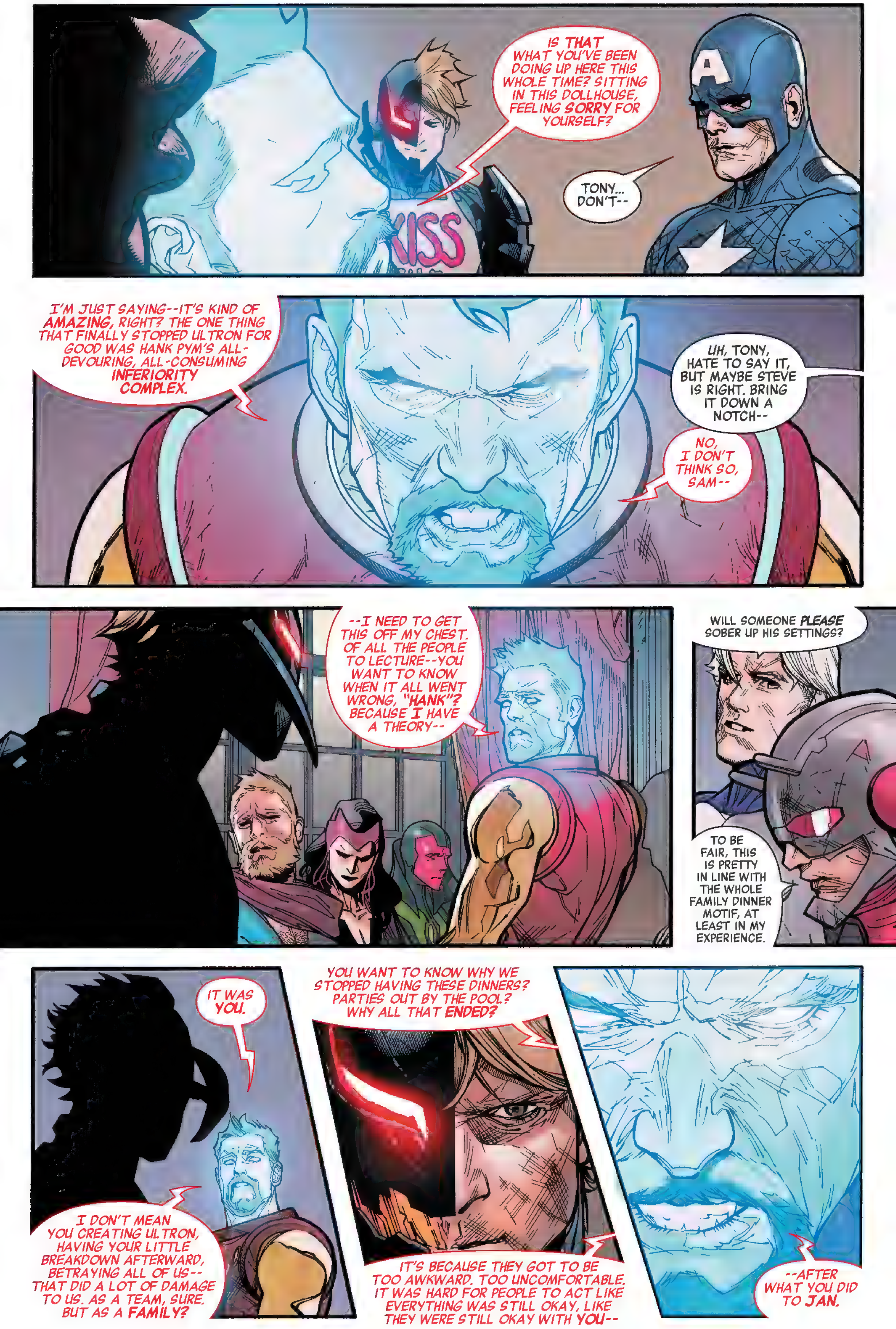

--BECAUSE *YOU* WERE ALREADY DOING IT FOR HIM.

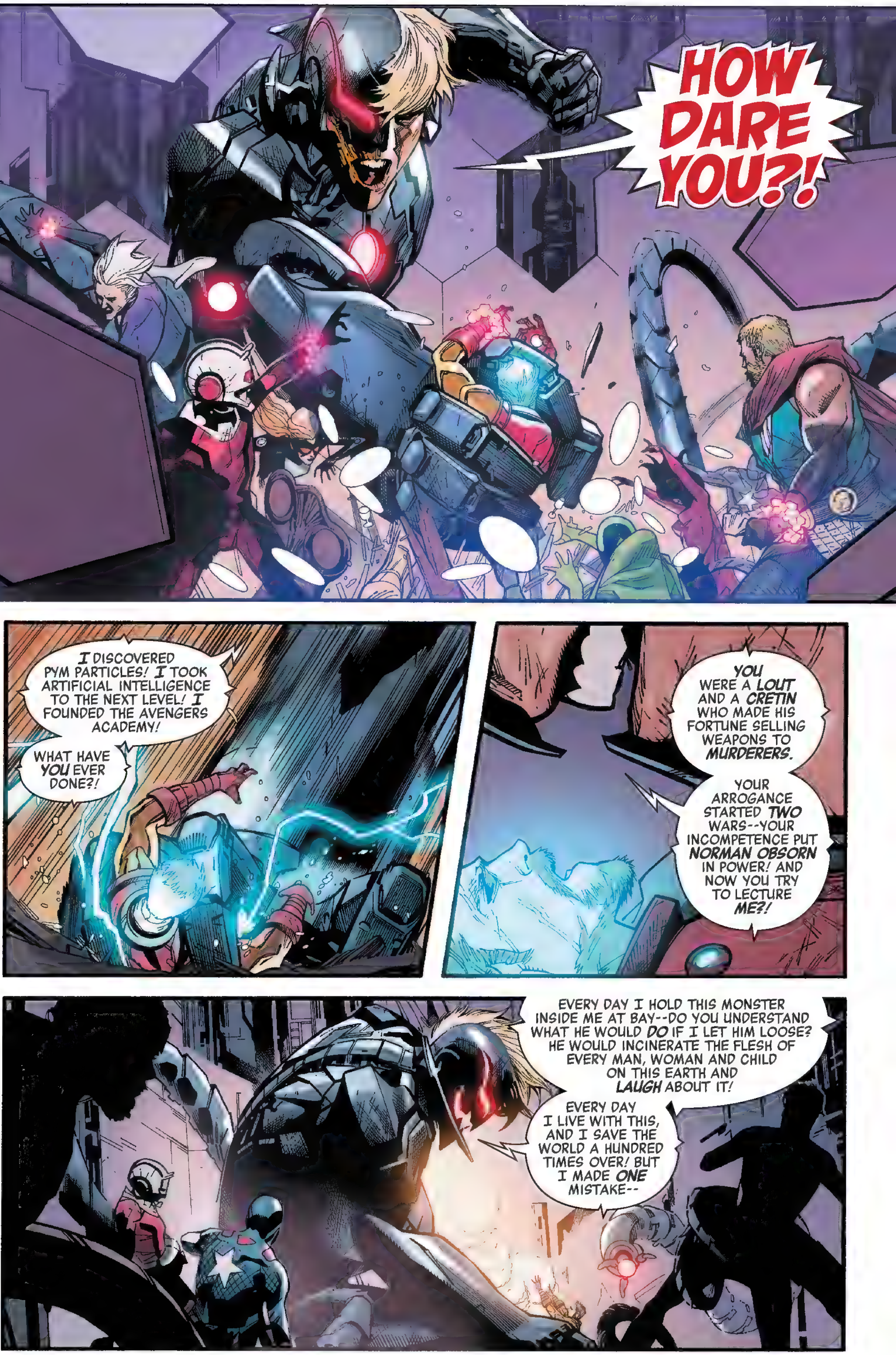

YOU WERE GOING TO TEAR EACH OTHER APART, AND BURN DOWN EVERYTHING YOU BUILT IN THE PROCESS. HE DIDN'T NEED TO LIFT A FINGER--

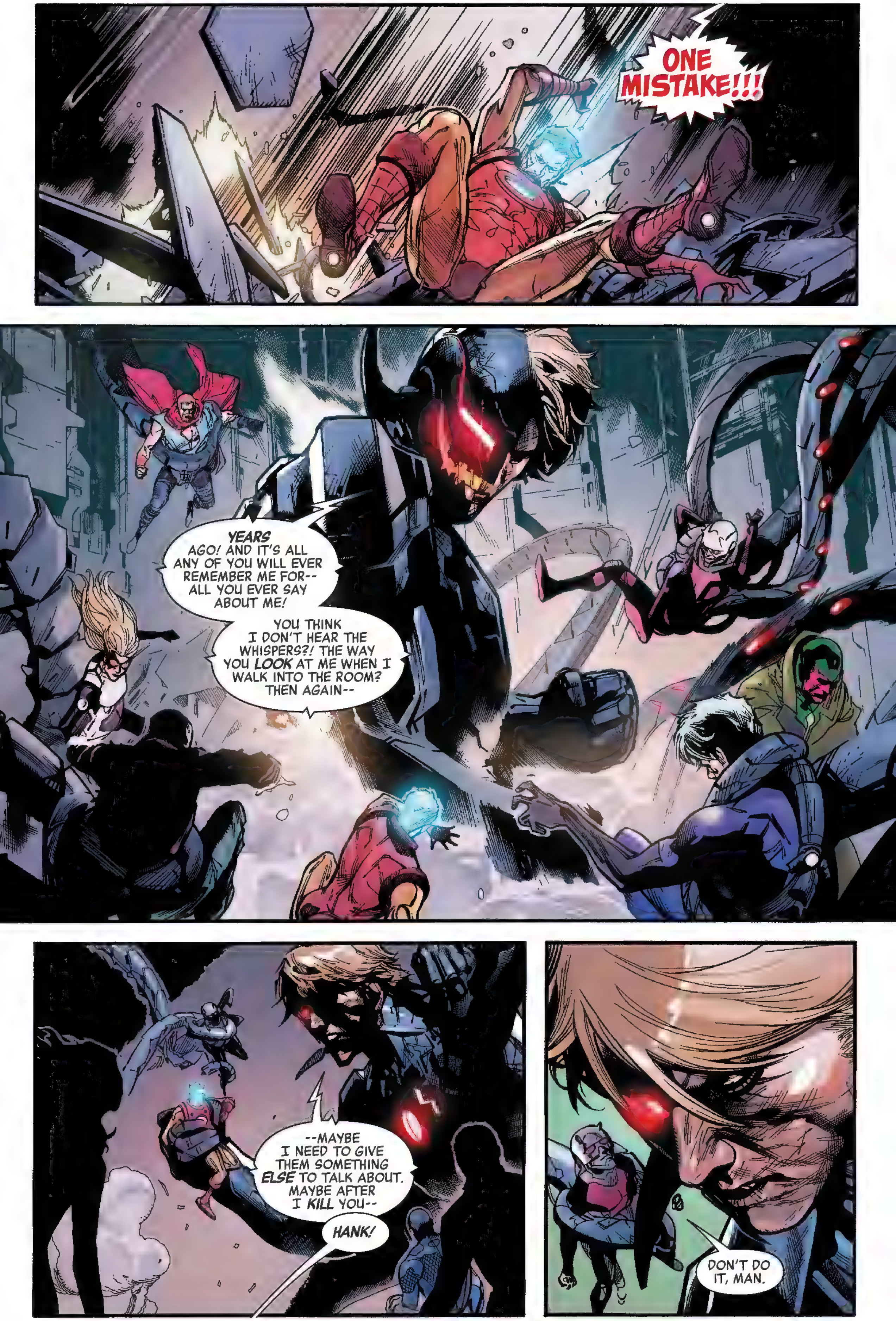

--HE JUST NEEDED TO *WAIT.*
KISS THE OVERLORD

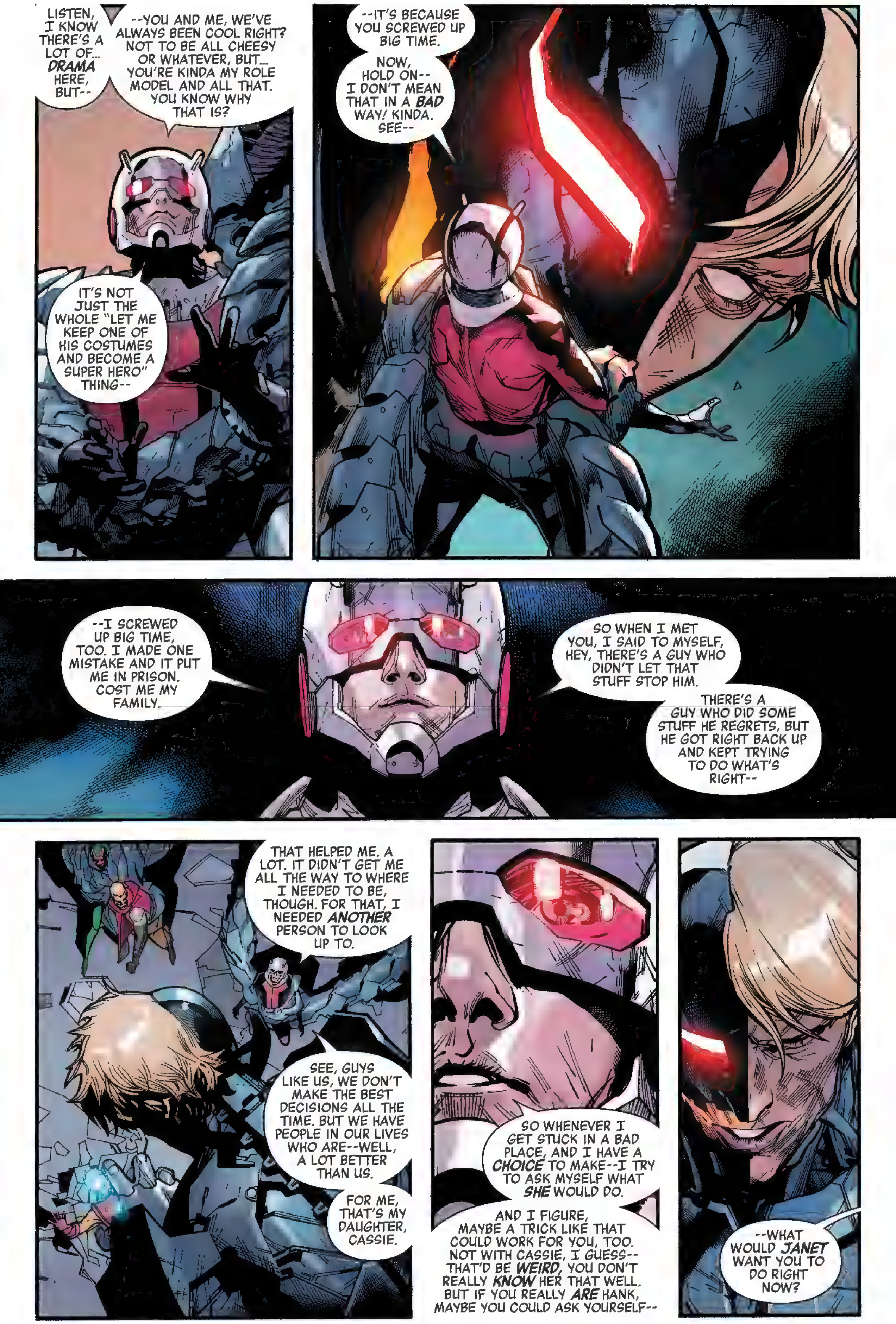

ULTRON--I HAPPEN TO AGREE WITH YOU...
...BUT HYDRA IS GOING TO **CHANGE** ALL OF THAT--BRING AN END TO ALL THIS WEAKNESS AND **CORRUPTION...**
OH, OF COURSE IT WILL, STEVE--OF COURSE--
--JUST LIKE TONY'S GRAND PLANS FOR SUPERHUMAN REGISTRATION MADE EVERYTHING **SO** MUCH BETTER.
KISS THE OVERLORD
OR PERHAPS YOU MEAN LIKE WHEN **WANDA** HERE TRIED TO FIX EVERYTHING--THAT GOT A BIT **MESSY** AS I RECALL...
S'TRUE. I GOT BLOWN UP.
YOU ALWAYS HAVE SUCH BIG IDEAS FOR SOLVING ALL THE WORLD'S PROBLEMS. FUNNY, THEN, HOW YOU JUST KEEP MAKING EVERYTHING **WORSE.**
BUT THAT'S WHY I BROUGHT YOU HERE--SO THAT WE COULD SIT AND HAVE A NICE DINNER TOGETHER, BREAK BREAD AND LAUGH, LIKE IN THE OLD DAYS--RECONNECT WITH WHAT WE'VE LOST--
I'M NOT INTERESTED IN NOSTALGIA. YOU HAVE SOMETHING THAT BELONGS TO HYDRA--
AND **WE** HAVE A SLIGHTLY **DIFFERENT** INTERPRETATION OF WHO IT BELONGS TO.
=SIGH= OF COURSE, THEY ONLY VISIT WHEN THEY **WANT** THINGS...
SAM, PLEASE--BE REASONABLE HERE--IF THIS ESCALATES--
**DON'T.** DON'T TALK TO ME LIKE YOU'RE MY **FRIEND--**
**STOP!** MY GOD, YOU PEOPLE--IT **NEVER** CHANGES! HAVE YOU NOT HEARD A **WORD** I'VE SAID?!
KISS THE OVERLORD

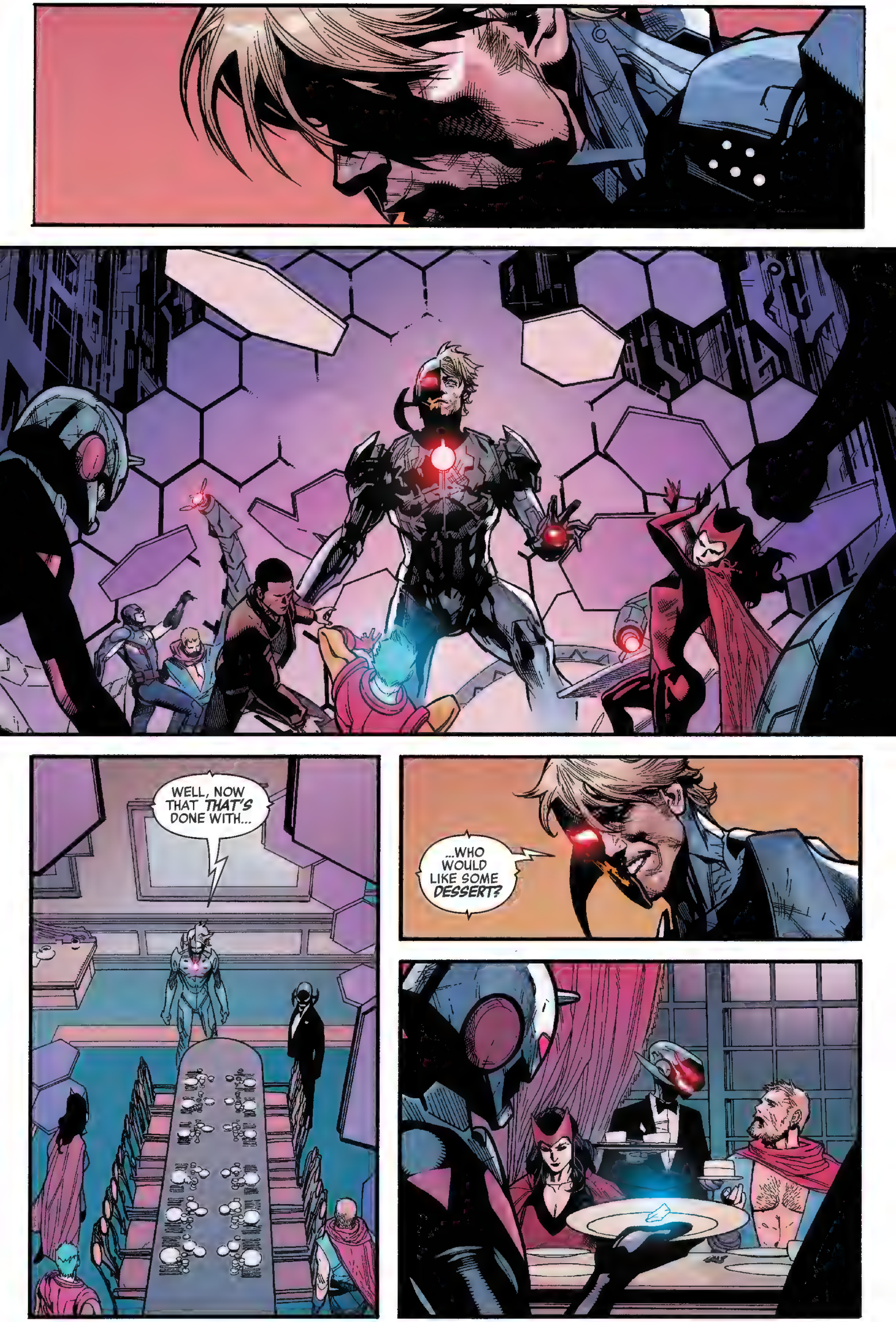

I'M TRYING TO HELP YOU! I'M ALWAYS TRYING TO HELP YOU--
--BUT YOU NEVER, EVER LISTEN TO ME, DO YOU?!
IF ROGERS SAYS "ASSEMBLE," YOU ALL CAN'T RUN INTO A FIRE FAST ENOUGH--AND IF STARK SAYS HE HAS SOME BIG IDEA, HALF OF YOU WILL HAPPILY LINE UP BEHIND HIM NO MATTER HOW TERRIBLE IT IS!
KISS THE OVERLORD
WHAT ABOUT ME?! I'M A FOUNDING AVENGER! I DESERVE SOME RESPECT! I DESERVE TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY! I--
HA HA HA HA HA!
HA HA HA!
IS SOMETHING FUNNY, TONY?
N-NO, NO, SORRY, IT'S JUST-- I DIDN'T BELIEVE IT--I DIDN'T THINK IT WAS ACTUALLY YOU UNTIL JUST NOW...
...BUT THAT-- THAT IS THE MOST HANK PYM THING I HAVE EVER HEARD ANYONE SAY.

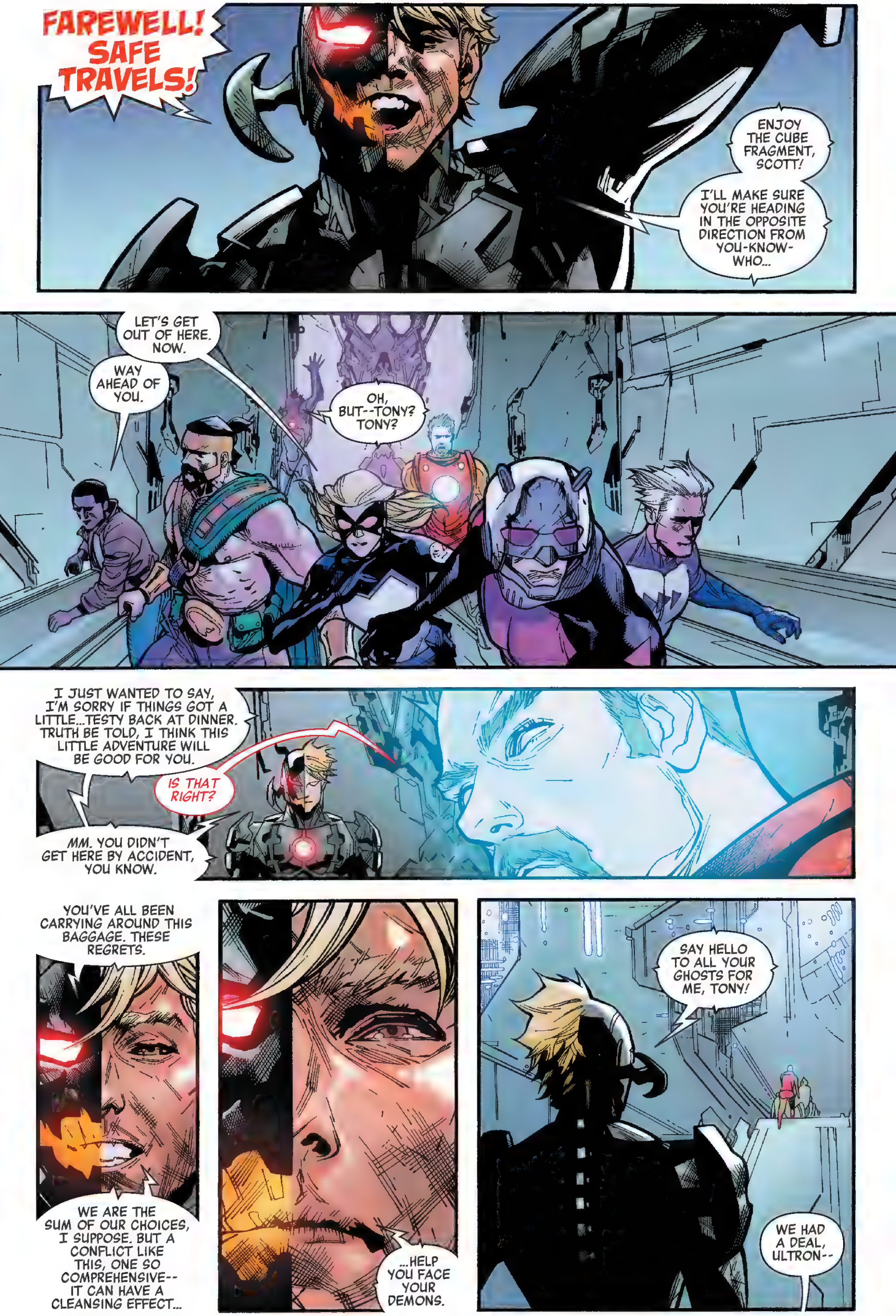

IS THAT WHAT YOU'VE BEEN DOING UP HERE THIS WHOLE TIME? SITTING IN THIS DOLLHOUSE, FEELING SORRY FOR YOURSELF?
KISS
TONY... DON'T--
I'M JUST SAYING--IT'S KIND OF AMAZING, RIGHT? THE ONE THING THAT FINALLY STOPPED ULTRON FOR GOOD WAS HANK PYM'S ALL-DEVOURING, ALL-CONSUMING INFERIORITY COMPLEX.
UH, TONY, HATE TO SAY IT, BUT MAYBE STEVE IS RIGHT. BRING IT DOWN A NOTCH--
NO, I DON'T THINK SO, SAM--
--I NEED TO GET THIS OFF MY CHEST. OF ALL THE PEOPLE TO LECTURE--YOU WANT TO KNOW WHEN IT ALL WENT WRONG, "HANK"? BECAUSE I HAVE A THEORY--
WILL SOMEONE PLEASE SOBER UP HIS SETTINGS?
TO BE FAIR, THIS IS PRETTY IN LINE WITH THE WHOLE FAMILY DINNER MOTIF, AT LEAST IN MY EXPERIENCE.
IT WAS YOU.
I DON'T MEAN YOU CREATING ULTRON, HAVING YOUR LITTLE BREAKDOWN AFTERWARD, BETRAYING ALL OF US--THAT DID A LOT OF DAMAGE TO US. AS A TEAM, SURE. BUT AS A FAMILY?
YOU WANT TO KNOW WHY WE STOPPED HAVING THESE DINNERS? PARTIES OUT BY THE POOL? WHY ALL THAT ENDED?
IT'S BECAUSE THEY GOT TO BE TOO AWKWARD. TOO UNCOMFORTABLE. IT WAS HARD FOR PEOPLE TO ACT LIKE EVERYTHING WAS STILL OKAY, LIKE THEY WERE STILL OKAY WITH YOU--
--AFTER WHAT YOU DID TO JAN.

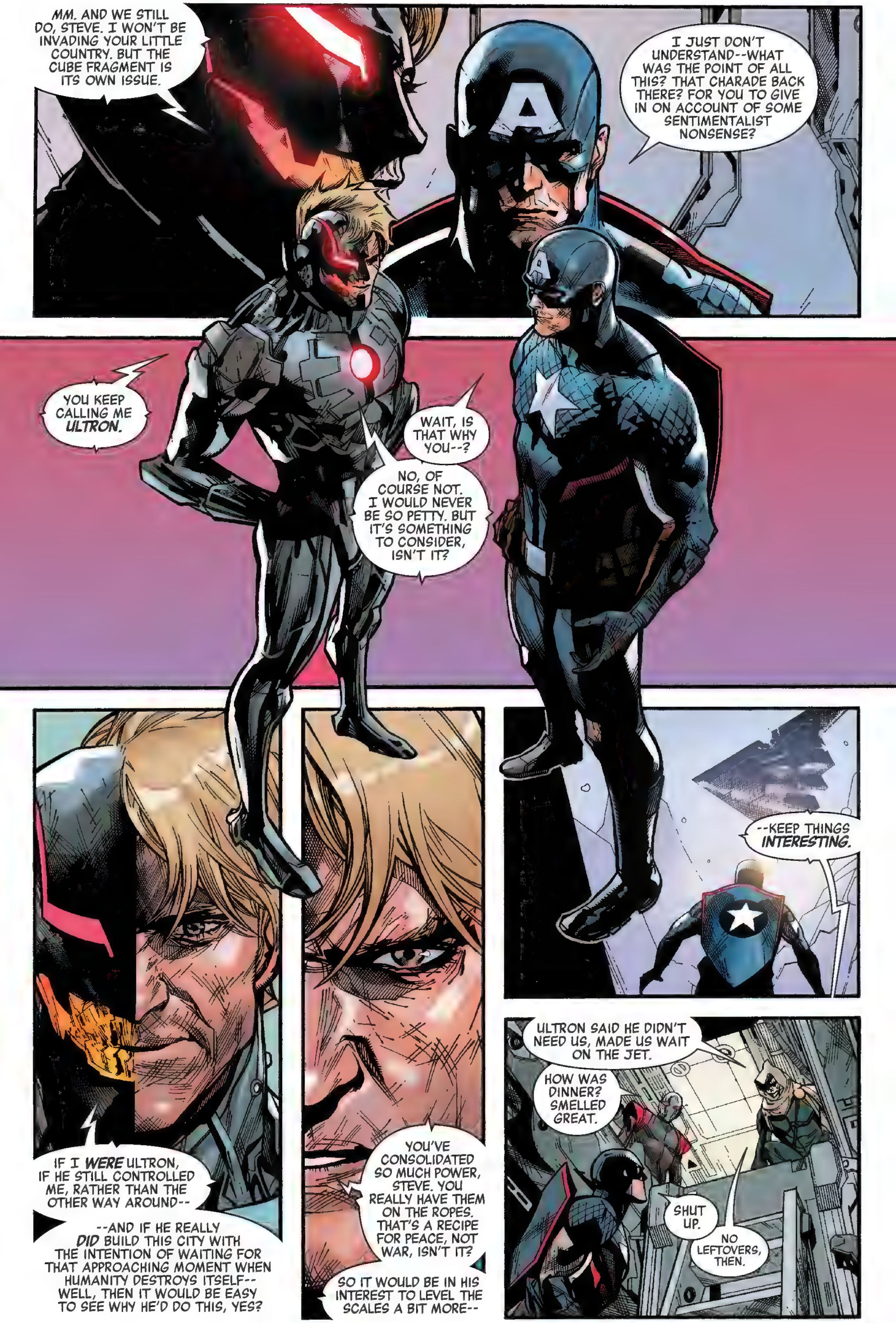

HOW DARE YOU?!
I DISCOVERED PYM PARTICLES! I TOOK ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TO THE NEXT LEVEL! I FOUNDED THE AVENGERS ACADEMY!
WHAT HAVE YOU EVER DONE?!
YOU WERE A LOUT AND A CRETIN WHO MADE HIS FORTUNE SELLING WEAPONS TO MURDERERS.
YOUR ARROGANCE STARTED TWO WARS--YOUR INCOMPETENCE PUT NORMAN OBSORN IN POWER! AND NOW YOU TRY TO LECTURE ME?!
EVERY DAY I HOLD THIS MONSTER INSIDE ME AT BAY--DO YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT HE WOULD DO IF I LET HIM LOOSE? HE WOULD INCINERATE THE FLESH OF EVERY MAN, WOMAN AND CHILD ON THIS EARTH AND LAUGH ABOUT IT!
EVERY DAY I LIVE WITH THIS, AND I SAVE THE WORLD A HUNDRED TIMES OVER! BUT I MADE ONE MISTAKE--

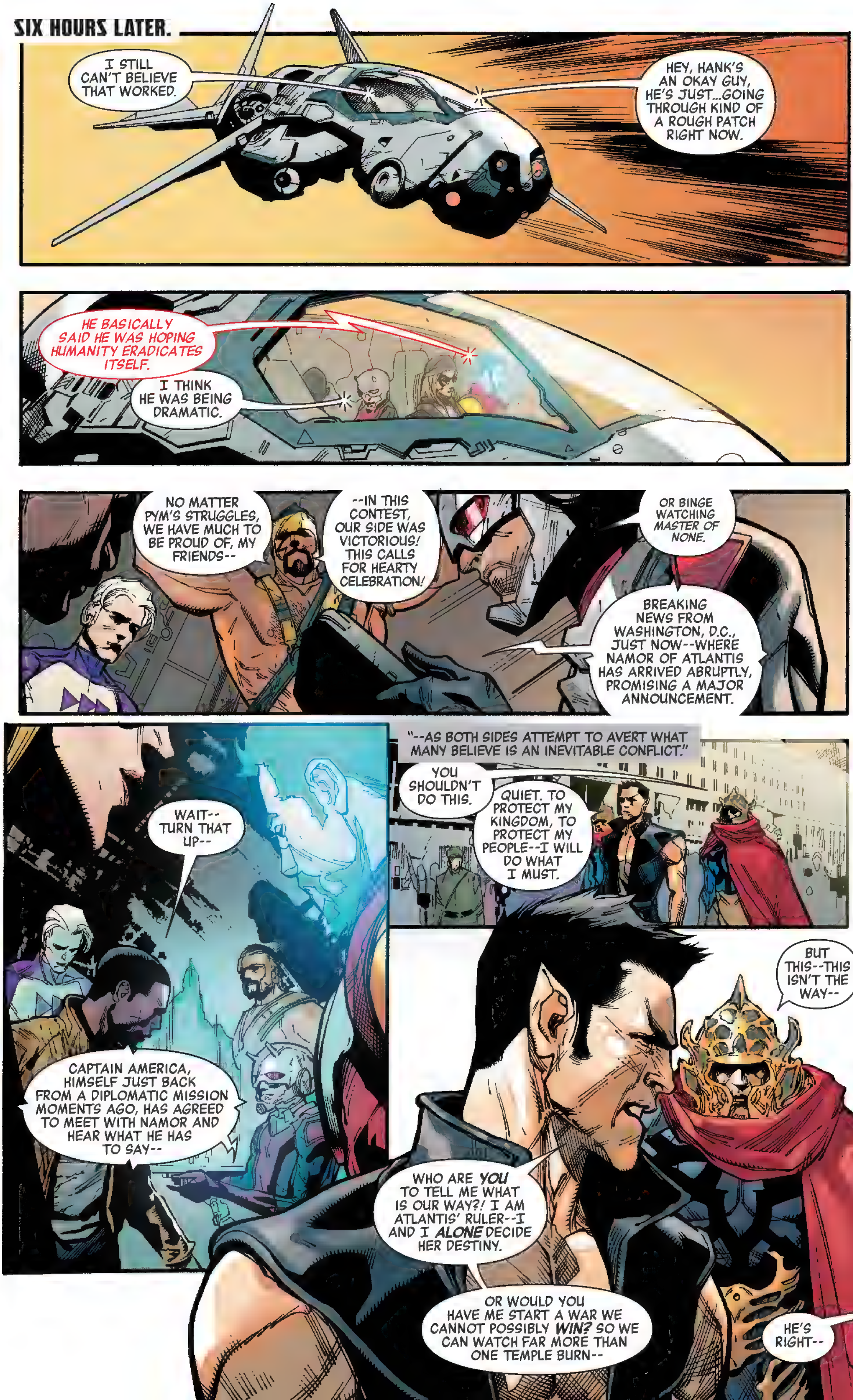

ONE MISTAKE!!!
YEARS AGO! AND IT'S ALL ANY OF YOU WILL EVER REMEMBER ME FOR-- ALL YOU EVER SAY ABOUT ME!
YOU THINK I DON'T HEAR THE WHISPERS?! THE WAY YOU LOOK AT ME WHEN I WALK INTO THE ROOM? THEN AGAIN--
--MAYBE I NEED TO GIVE THEM SOMETHING ELSE TO TALK ABOUT. MAYBE AFTER I KILL YOU--
HANK!
DON'T DO IT, MAN.

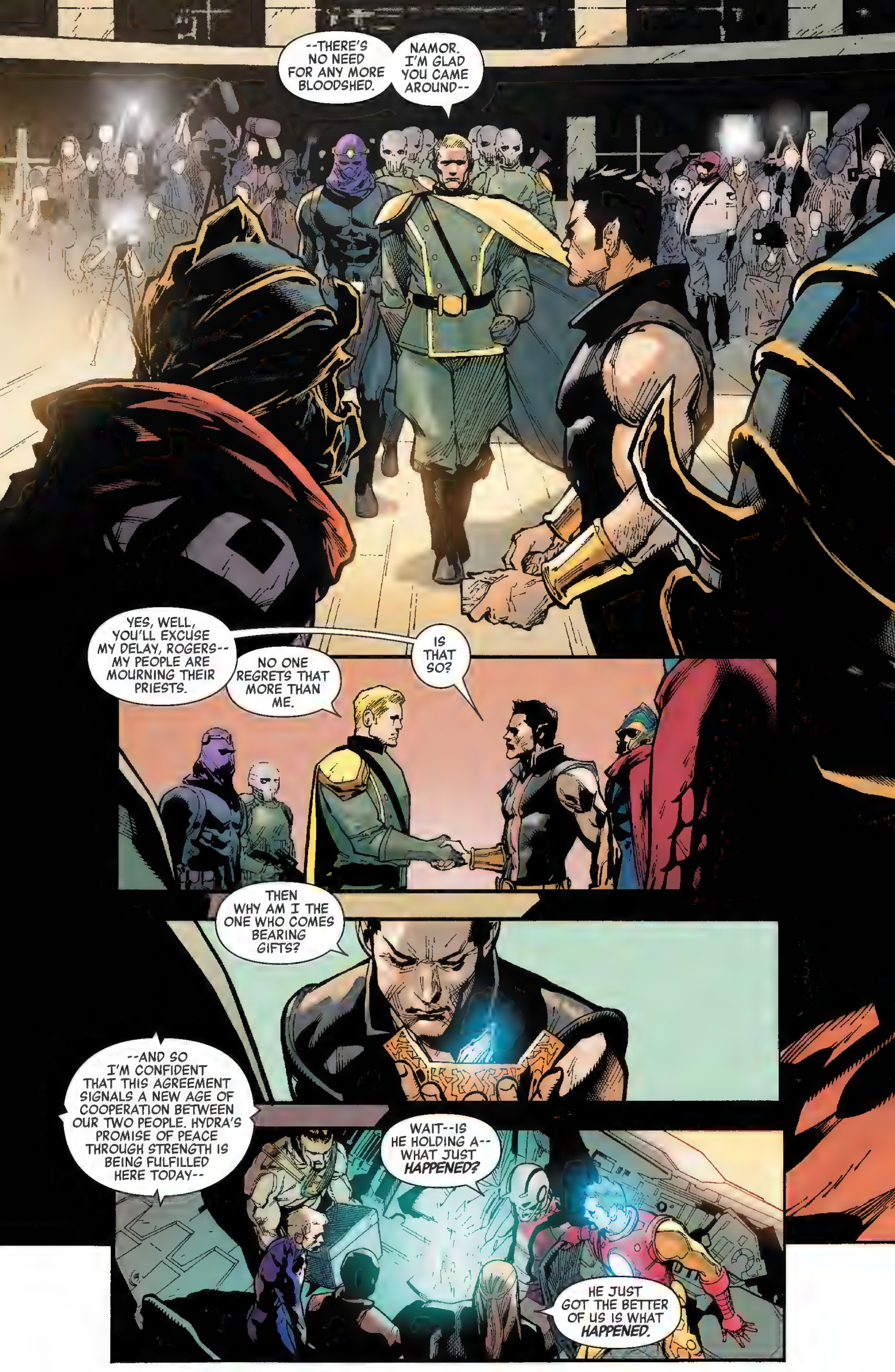

LISTEN, I KNOW THERE'S A LOT OF... DRAMA HERE, BUT--
--YOU AND ME, WE'VE ALWAYS BEEN COOL RIGHT? NOT TO BE ALL CHEESY OR WHATEVER, BUT... YOU'RE KINDA MY ROLE MODEL AND ALL THAT. YOU KNOW WHY THAT IS?
IT'S NOT JUST THE WHOLE "LET ME KEEP ONE OF HIS COSTUMES AND BECOME A SUPER HERO" THING--
--IT'S BECAUSE YOU SCREWED UP BIG TIME.
NOW, HOLD ON-- I DON'T MEAN THAT IN A BAD WAY! KINDA. SEE--
--I SCREWED UP BIG TIME, TOO. I MADE ONE MISTAKE AND IT PUT ME IN PRISON. COST ME MY FAMILY.
SO WHEN I MET YOU, I SAID TO MYSELF, HEY, THERE'S A GUY WHO DIDN'T LET THAT STUFF STOP HIM.
THERE'S A GUY WHO DID SOME STUFF HE REGRETS, BUT HE GOT RIGHT BACK UP AND KEPT TRYING TO DO WHAT'S RIGHT--
THAT HELPED ME. A LOT. IT DIDN'T GET ME ALL THE WAY TO WHERE I NEEDED TO BE, THOUGH. FOR THAT, I NEEDED ANOTHER PERSON TO LOOK UP TO.
SEE, GUYS LIKE US, WE DON'T MAKE THE BEST DECISIONS ALL THE TIME. BUT WE HAVE PEOPLE IN OUR LIVES WHO ARE--WELL, A LOT BETTER THAN US.
FOR ME, THAT'S MY DAUGHTER, CASSIE.
SO WHENEVER I GET STUCK IN A BAD PLACE, AND I HAVE A CHOICE TO MAKE--I TRY TO ASK MYSELF WHAT SHE WOULD DO.
AND I FIGURE, MAYBE A TRICK LIKE THAT COULD WORK FOR YOU, TOO. NOT WITH CASSIE, I GUESS-- THAT'D BE WEIRD, YOU DON'T REALLY KNOW HER THAT WELL. BUT IF YOU REALLY ARE HANK, MAYBE YOU COULD ASK YOURSELF--
--WHAT WOULD JANET WANT YOU TO DO RIGHT NOW?

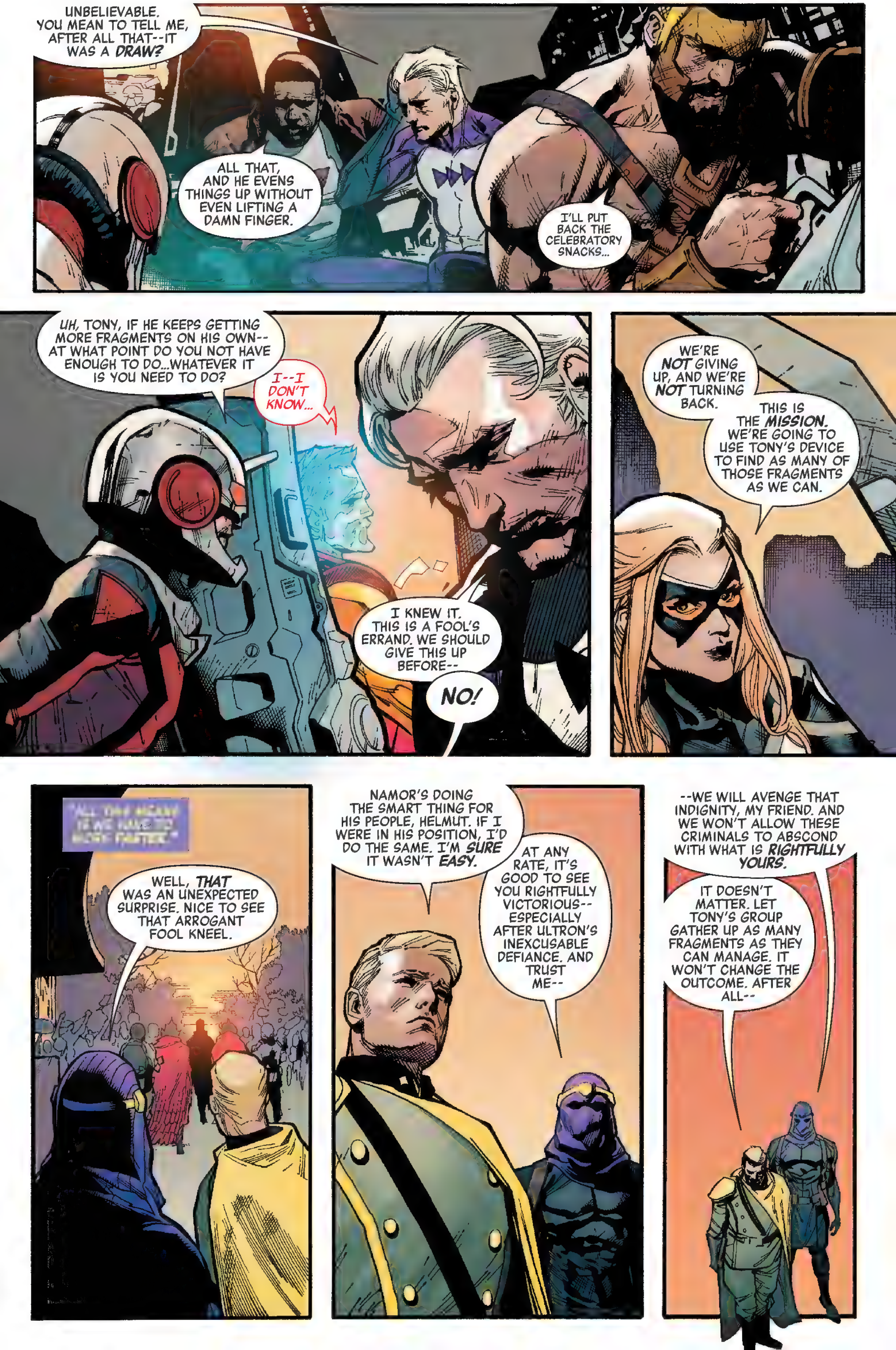

WELL, NOW THAT *THAT'S* DONE WITH...
...WHO WOULD LIKE SOME *DESSERT?*

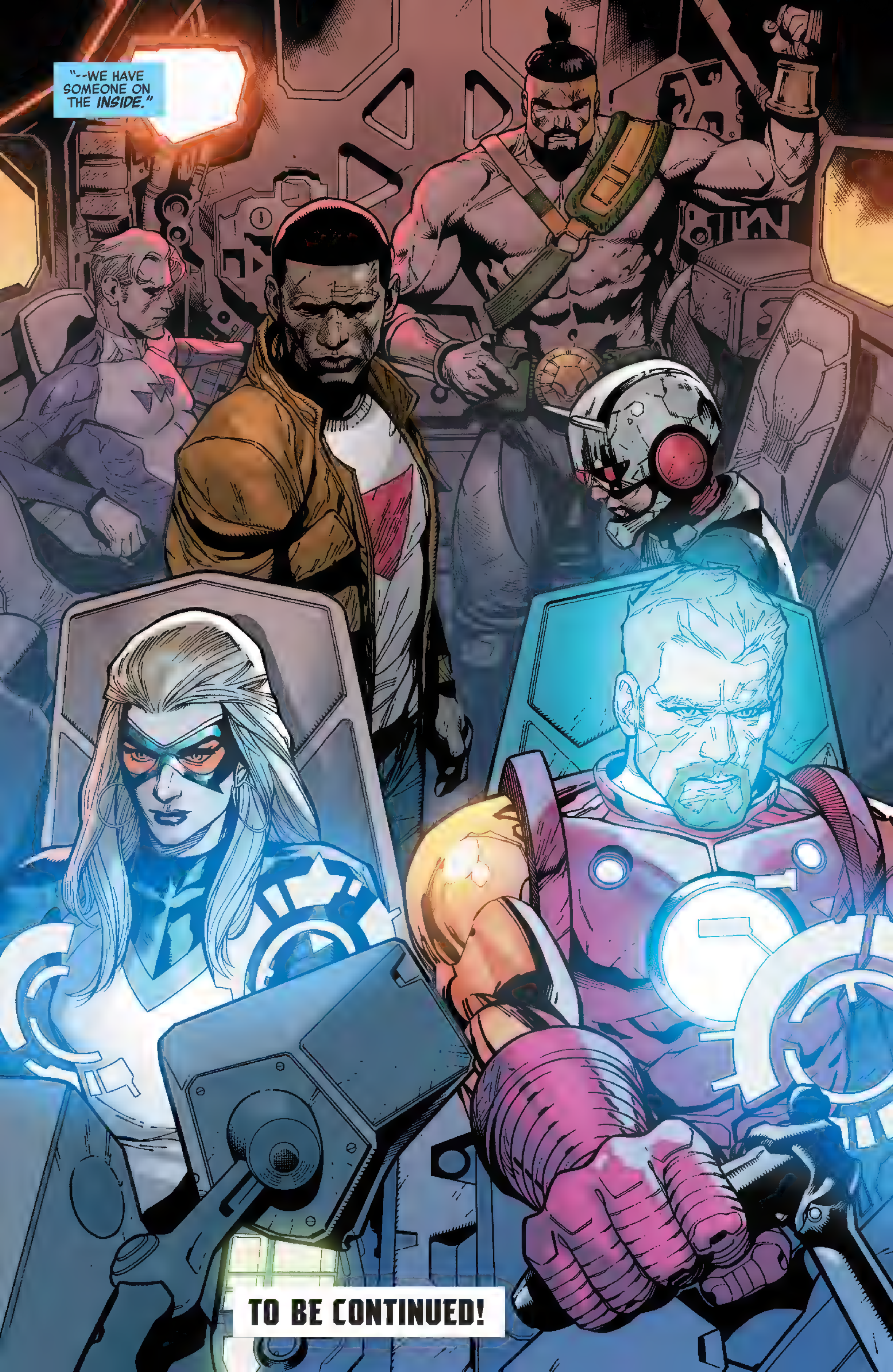

FAREWELL! SAFE TRAVELS!
ENJOY THE CUBE FRAGMENT, SCOTT!
I'LL MAKE SURE YOU'RE HEADING IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION FROM YOU-KNOW-WHO...
LET'S GET OUT OF HERE. NOW.
WAY AHEAD OF YOU.
OH, BUT--TONY? TONY?
I JUST WANTED TO SAY, I'M SORRY IF THINGS GOT A LITTLE...TESTY BACK AT DINNER. TRUTH BE TOLD, I THINK THIS LITTLE ADVENTURE WILL BE GOOD FOR YOU.
IS THAT RIGHT?
MM. YOU DIDN'T GET HERE BY ACCIDENT, YOU KNOW.
YOU'VE ALL BEEN CARRYING AROUND THIS BAGGAGE. THESE REGRETS.
WE ARE THE SUM OF OUR CHOICES, I SUPPOSE. BUT A CONFLICT LIKE THIS, ONE SO COMPREHENSIVE-- IT CAN HAVE A CLEANSING EFFECT...
...HELP YOU FACE YOUR DEMONS.
SAY HELLO TO ALL YOUR GHOSTS FOR ME, TONY!
WE HAD A DEAL, ULTRON--


MM. AND WE STILL DO, STEVE. I WON'T BE INVADING YOUR LITTLE COUNTRY. BUT THE CUBE FRAGMENT IS ITS OWN ISSUE.
I JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND--WHAT WAS THE POINT OF ALL THIS? THAT CHARADE BACK THERE? FOR YOU TO GIVE IN ON ACCOUNT OF SOME SENTIMENTALIST NONSENSE?
YOU KEEP CALLING ME *ULTRON.*
WAIT, IS THAT WHY YOU--?
NO, OF COURSE NOT. I WOULD NEVER BE SO PETTY. BUT IT'S SOMETHING TO CONSIDER, ISN'T IT?
IF I *WERE* ULTRON, IF HE STILL CONTROLLED ME, RATHER THAN THE OTHER WAY AROUND--
--AND IF HE REALLY *DID* BUILD THIS CITY WITH THE INTENTION OF WAITING FOR THAT APPROACHING MOMENT WHEN HUMANITY DESTROYS ITSELF--WELL, THEN IT WOULD BE EASY TO SEE WHY HE'D DO THIS, YES?
YOU'VE CONSOLIDATED SO MUCH POWER, STEVE. YOU REALLY HAVE THEM ON THE ROPES. THAT'S A RECIPE FOR PEACE, NOT WAR, ISN'T IT?
SO IT WOULD BE IN HIS INTEREST TO LEVEL THE SCALES A BIT MORE--
--KEEP THINGS *INTERESTING.*
ULTRON SAID HE DIDN'T NEED US, MADE US WAIT ON THE JET.
HOW WAS DINNER? SMELLED GREAT.
SHUT UP.
NO LEFTOVERS, THEN.


SIX HOURS LATER.
I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE THAT WORKED.
HEY, HANK'S AN OKAY GUY, HE'S JUST...GOING THROUGH KIND OF A ROUGH PATCH RIGHT NOW.
HE BASICALLY SAID HE WAS HOPING HUMANITY ERADICATES ITSELF.
I THINK HE WAS BEING DRAMATIC.
NO MATTER PYM'S STRUGGLES, WE HAVE MUCH TO BE PROUD OF, MY FRIENDS--
--IN THIS CONTEST, OUR SIDE WAS VICTORIOUS! THIS CALLS FOR HEARTY CELEBRATION!
OR BINGE WATCHING *MASTER OF NONE.*
BREAKING NEWS FROM WASHINGTON, D.C., JUST NOW--WHERE NAMOR OF ATLANTIS HAS ARRIVED ABRUPTLY, PROMISING A MAJOR ANNOUNCEMENT.
WAIT--TURN THAT UP--
CAPTAIN AMERICA, HIMSELF JUST BACK FROM A DIPLOMATIC MISSION MOMENTS AGO, HAS AGREED TO MEET WITH NAMOR AND HEAR WHAT HE HAS TO SAY--
"--AS BOTH SIDES ATTEMPT TO AVERT WHAT MANY BELIEVE IS AN INEVITABLE CONFLICT."
YOU SHOULDN'T DO THIS.
QUIET. TO PROTECT MY KINGDOM, TO PROTECT MY PEOPLE--I WILL DO WHAT I MUST.
BUT THIS--THIS ISN'T THE WAY--
WHO ARE ***YOU*** TO TELL ME WHAT IS OUR WAY?! I AM ATLANTIS' RULER--I AND I ***ALONE*** DECIDE HER DESTINY.
OR WOULD YOU HAVE ME START A WAR WE CANNOT POSSIBLY ***WIN?*** SO WE CAN WATCH FAR MORE THAN ONE TEMPLE BURN--
HE'S RIGHT--


--THERE'S NO NEED FOR ANY MORE BLOODSHED.
NAMOR. I'M GLAD YOU CAME AROUND--
YES, WELL, YOU'LL EXCUSE MY DELAY, ROGERS-- MY PEOPLE ARE MOURNING THEIR PRIESTS.
IS THAT SO?
NO ONE REGRETS THAT MORE THAN ME.
THEN WHY AM I THE ONE WHO COMES BEARING GIFTS?
--AND SO I'M CONFIDENT THAT THIS AGREEMENT SIGNALS A NEW AGE OF COOPERATION BETWEEN OUR TWO PEOPLE. HYDRA'S PROMISE OF PEACE THROUGH STRENGTH IS BEING FULFILLED HERE TODAY--
WAIT--IS HE HOLDING A-- WHAT JUST *HAPPENED?*
HE JUST GOT THE BETTER OF US IS WHAT *HAPPENED.*


UNBELIEVABLE. YOU MEAN TO TELL ME, AFTER ALL THAT--IT WAS A *DRAW?*
ALL THAT, AND HE EVENS THINGS UP WITHOUT EVEN LIFTING A DAMN FINGER.
I'LL PUT BACK THE CELEBRATORY SNACKS...
UH, TONY, IF HE KEEPS GETTING MORE FRAGMENTS ON HIS OWN--AT WHAT POINT DO YOU NOT HAVE ENOUGH TO DO...WHATEVER IT IS YOU NEED TO DO?
I--I DON'T KNOW...
I KNEW IT. THIS IS A FOOL'S ERRAND. WE SHOULD GIVE THIS UP BEFORE--
*NO!*
WE'RE *NOT* GIVING UP, AND WE'RE *NOT* TURNING BACK.
THIS IS THE *MISSION.* WE'RE GOING TO USE TONY'S DEVICE TO FIND AS MANY OF THOSE FRAGMENTS AS WE CAN.
"ALL THIS MEANS IS WE HAVE TO WORK FASTER."
WELL, *THAT* WAS AN UNEXPECTED SURPRISE. NICE TO SEE THAT ARROGANT FOOL KNEEL.
NAMOR'S DOING THE SMART THING FOR HIS PEOPLE, HELMUT. IF I WERE IN HIS POSITION, I'D DO THE SAME. I'M *SURE* IT WASN'T *EASY.*
AT ANY RATE, IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU RIGHTFULLY VICTORIOUS--ESPECIALLY AFTER ULTRON'S INEXCUSABLE DEFIANCE. AND TRUST ME--
--WE WILL AVENGE THAT INDIGNITY, MY FRIEND. AND WE WON'T ALLOW THESE CRIMINALS TO ABSCOND WITH WHAT IS *RIGHTFULLY YOURS.*
IT DOESN'T MATTER. LET TONY'S GROUP GATHER UP AS MANY FRAGMENTS AS THEY CAN MANAGE. IT WON'T CHANGE THE OUTCOME. AFTER ALL--


"--WE HAVE SOMEONE ON THE *INSIDE.*"
TO BE CONTINUED!

# SECRET EMPIRE
## JUNE

### SECRET EMPIRE: BRAVE NEW WORLD #1 & #2

THE INVADERS RETURN...AND A NEW PATRIOT IS BORN!

### CAPTAIN AMERICA: STEVE ROGERS #18

WILL NAMOR AND BLACK PANTHER KNEEL BEFORE HYDRA?

### CAPTAIN AMERICA: SAM WILSON #23

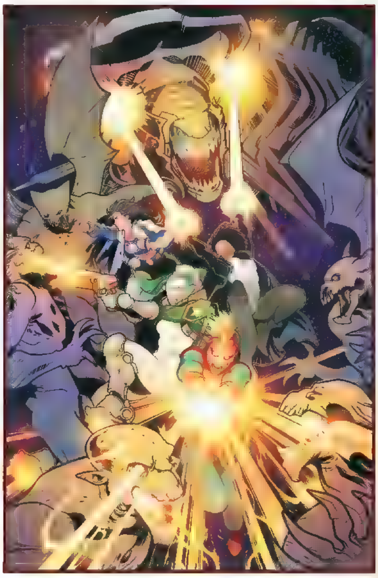
SAM LEADS TONY STARK'S TEAM ON A DARING ESCAPE FROM THE U.S.!

## BEYOND THE SHIELD

### GUARDIANS ANNUAL #1

THE GUARDIANS SEARCH FOR A WEAPON THAT CAN TURN THE TIDE AGAINST THE CHITAURI!

### THE MIGHTY CAPTAIN MARVEL #6



THE BATTLE AGAINST THE CHITAURI RAGES ON, BUT CAPTAIN MARVEL'S FORCES ARE RUNNING OUT OF HOPE.

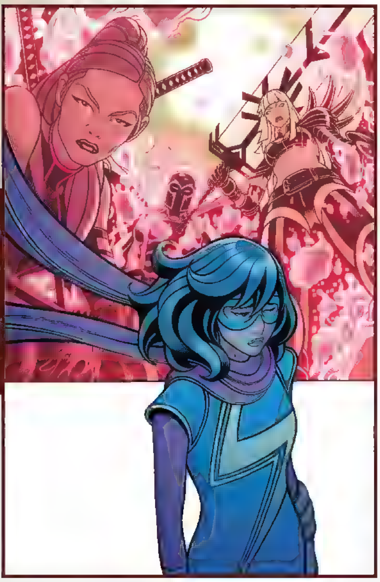
### DEADPOOL #32

CAPTAIN AMERICA WOULDN'T STEER DEADPOOL WRONG... RIGHT?

# SECRET EMPIRE

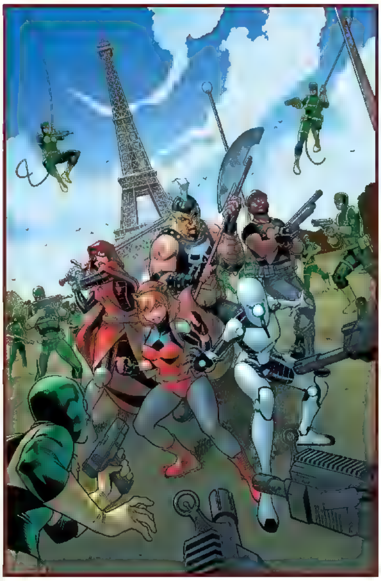
## JUNE

### SECRET WARRIORS #3



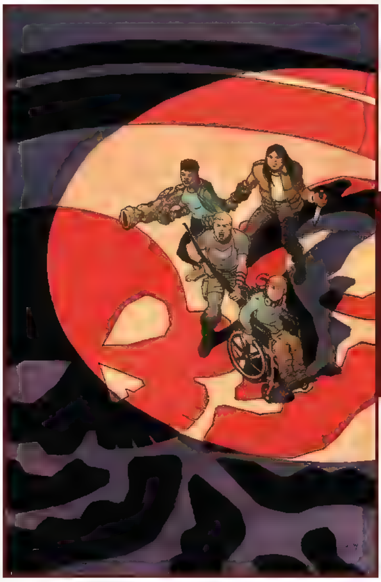
HOW FAR WILL MS. MARVEL GO TO PROTECT INHUMANS FROM HYDRA?

### U.S.AVENGERS #7



AVENGERS OF EUROPE, ASSEMBLE!

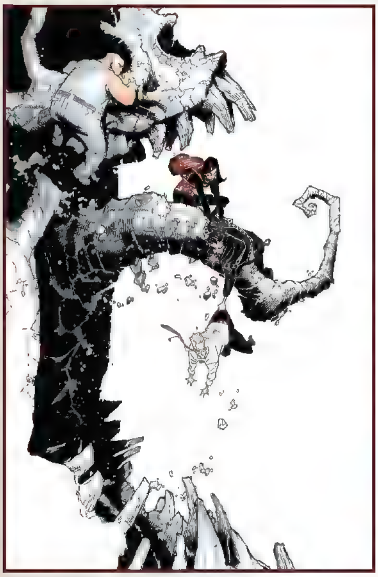
### OCCUPY AVENGERS #8



HAWKEYE'S CHAMPIONS OF THE PEOPLE MAKE ONE LAST STAND AGAINST HYDRA.

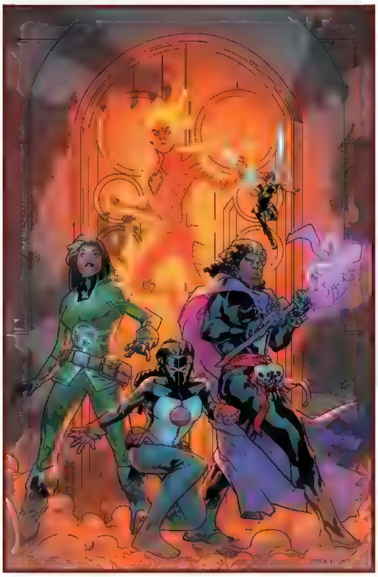
## DARKFORCE NEW YORK

### DOCTOR STRANGE #22



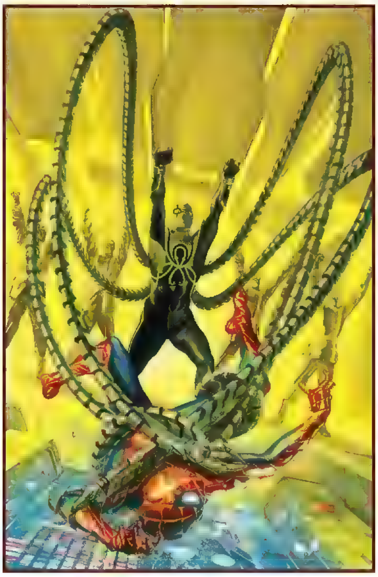
DOCTOR STRANGE FINDS AN UNLIKELY ALLY IN THE FIGHT AGAINST THE DARKFORCE: WILSON FISK.

### UNCANNY AVENGERS #24



TRICKED BY THEIR FORMER LEADER AND ISOLATED IN THE DARKFORCE, THE UNITY SQUAD FIGHTS TO SURVIVE.

### AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #29



SUPERIOR OCTOPUS IS BACK--AND HE'S AFTER PARKER INDUSTRIES!

# Secret Empire

## Next

SECRET EMPIRE
#5

Tony Stark's mission to save Captain America falters, and the Underground's time is running out.

### Secret Empire: Underground #1

The heroes of the underground race Captain America to a Cosmic Cube fragment in the Savage Land!

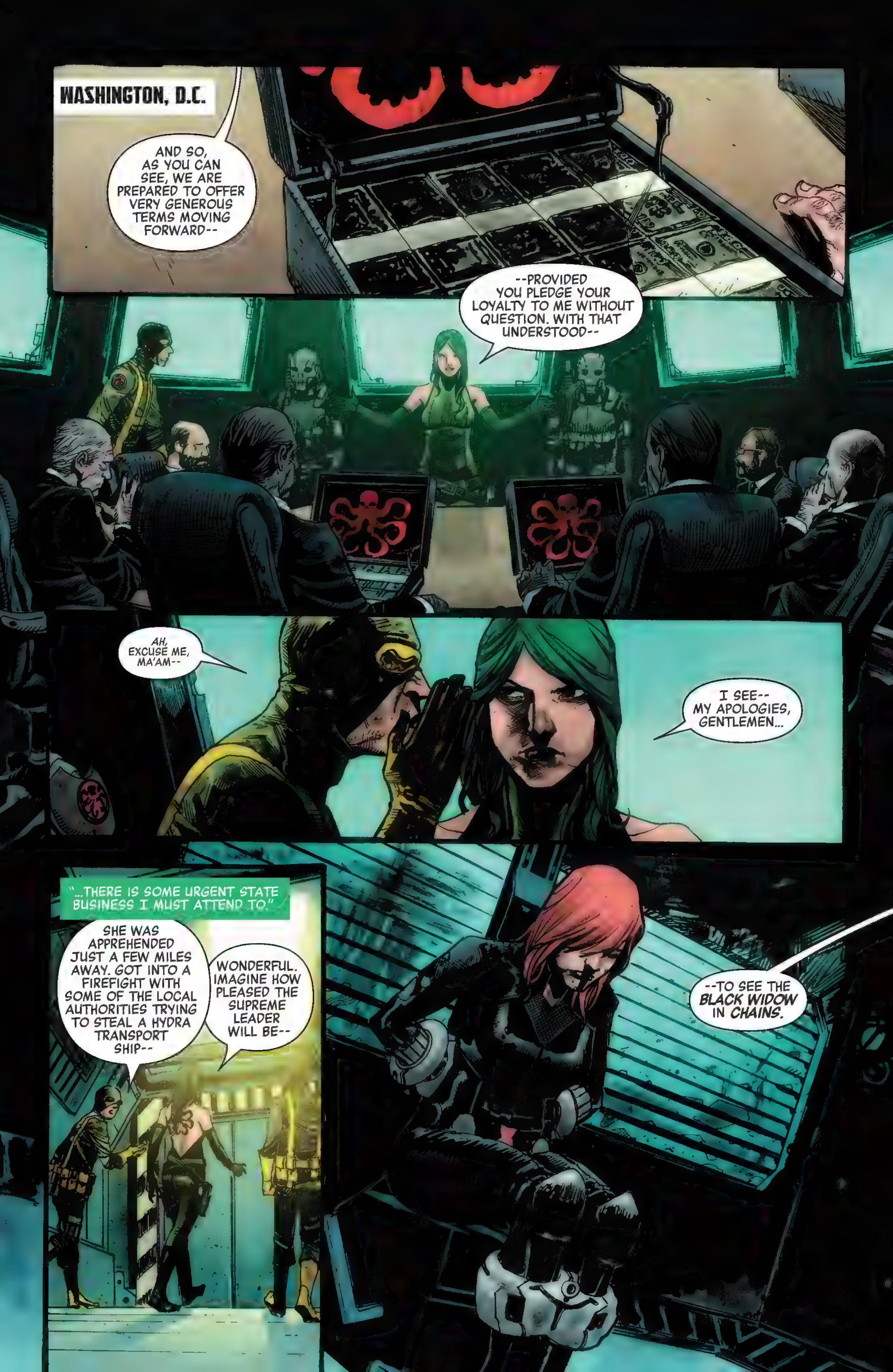
### Secret Empire: United #1

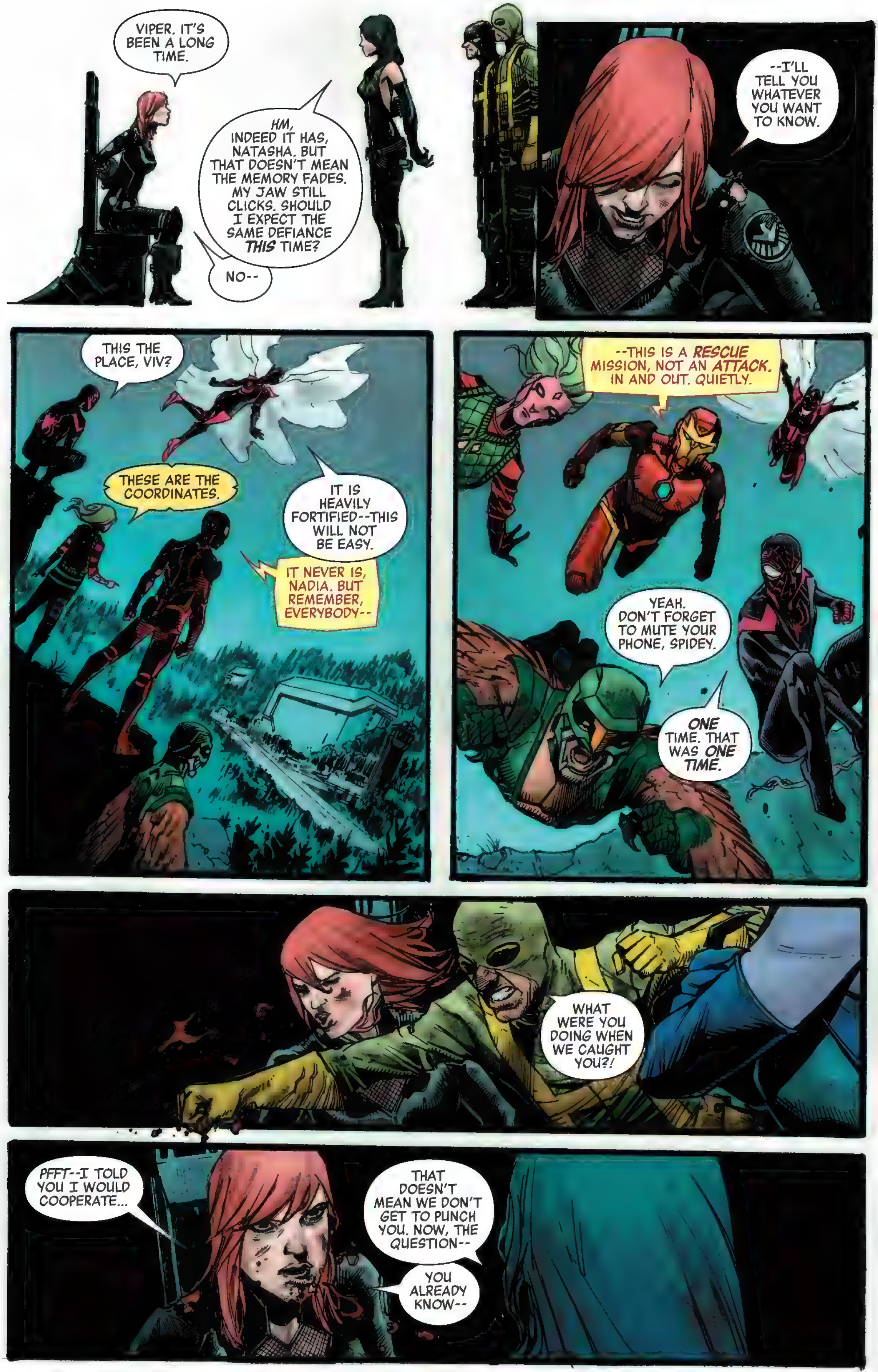
Tensions are rising in the mutant homeland of New Tian, and Steve Rogers isn't happy about it.

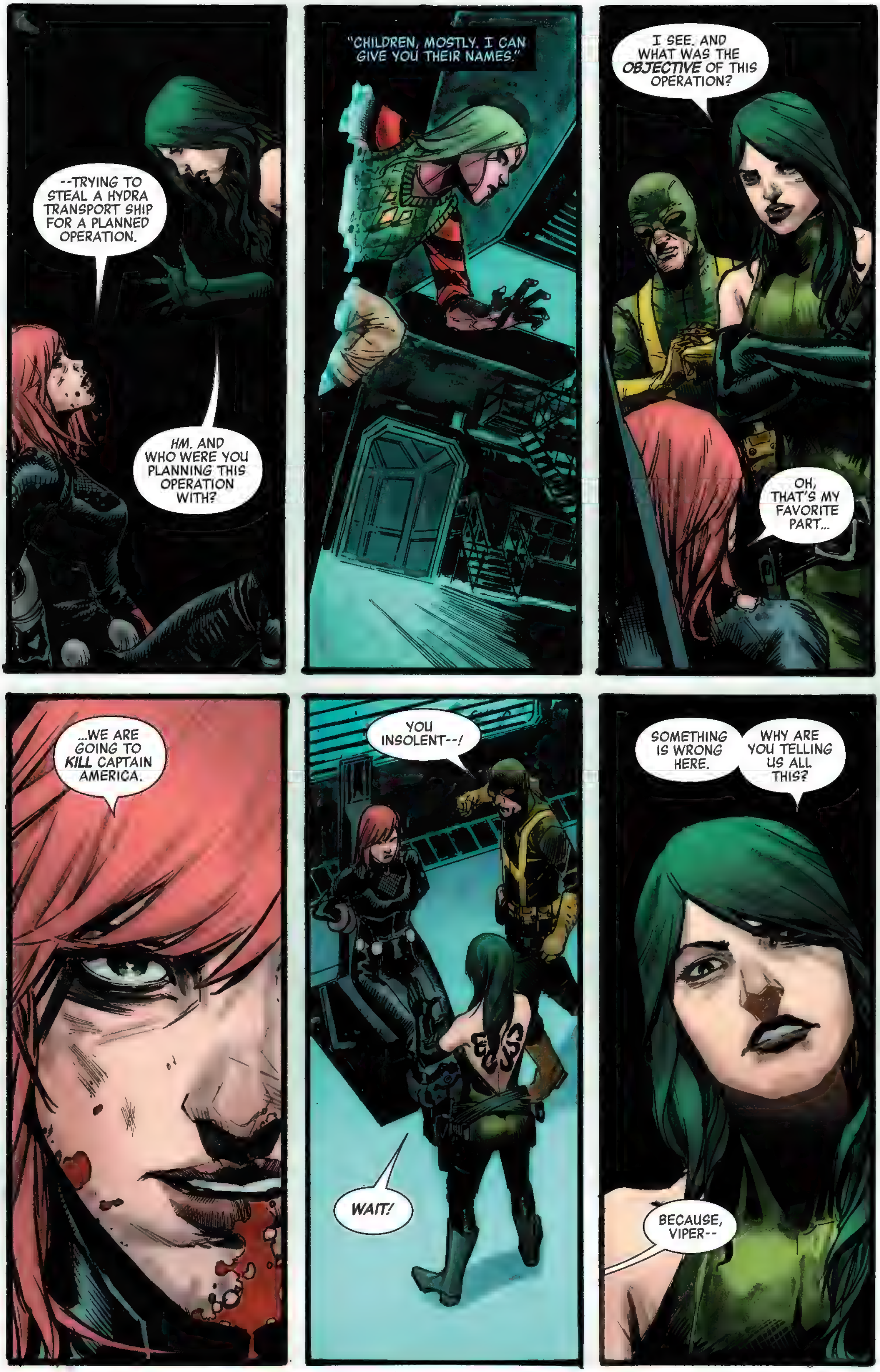
# SECRET EMPIRE™

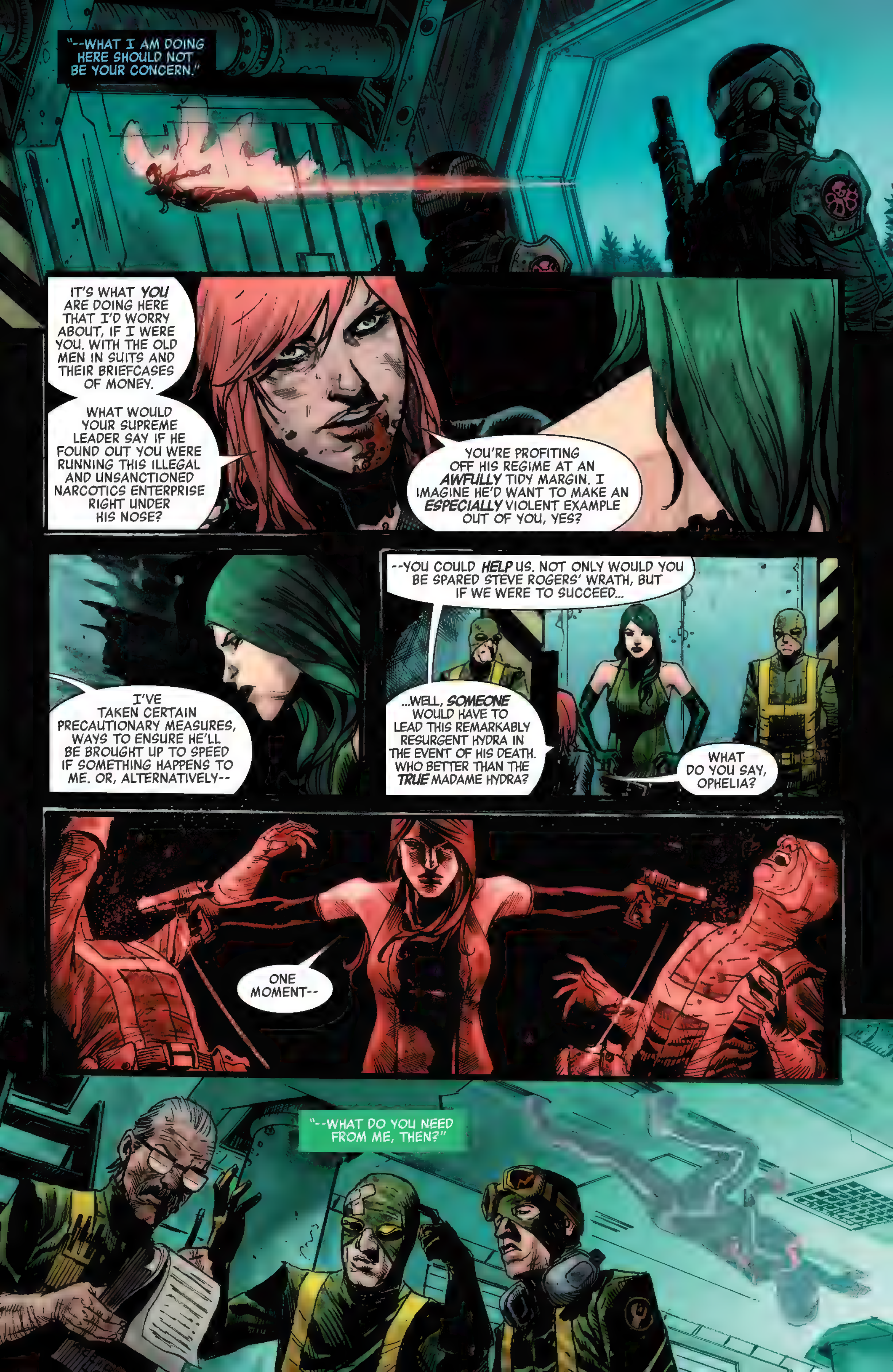
MARVEL
#5
BROOKS

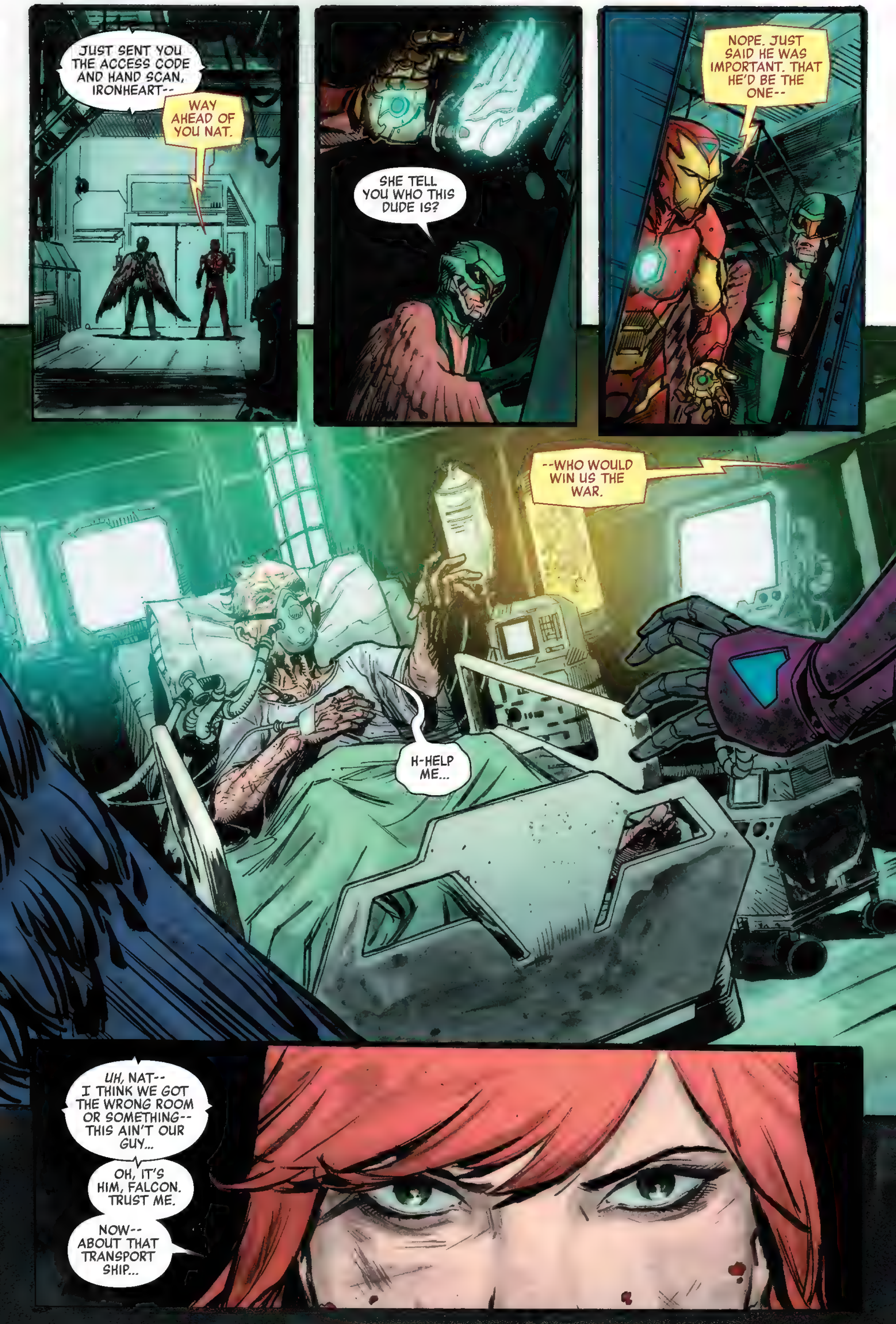
NICK SPENCER, ANDREA SORRENTINO, ROD REIS, JOSHUA CASSARA


WASHINGTON, D.C.
AND SO, AS YOU CAN SEE, WE ARE PREPARED TO OFFER VERY GENEROUS TERMS MOVING FORWARD--
--PROVIDED YOU PLEDGE YOUR LOYALTY TO ME WITHOUT QUESTION. WITH THAT UNDERSTOOD--
AH, EXCUSE ME, MA'AM--
I SEE-- MY APOLOGIES, GENTLEMEN...
"...THERE IS SOME URGENT STATE BUSINESS I MUST ATTEND TO."
SHE WAS APPREHENDED JUST A FEW MILES AWAY. GOT INTO A FIREFIGHT WITH SOME OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES TRYING TO STEAL A HYDRA TRANSPORT SHIP--
WONDERFUL. IMAGINE HOW PLEASED THE SUPREME LEADER WILL BE--
--TO SEE THE *BLACK WIDOW* IN *CHAINS*.


VIPER. IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME.
HM, INDEED IT HAS, NATASHA. BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN THE MEMORY FADES. MY JAW STILL CLICKS. SHOULD I EXPECT THE SAME DEFIANCE *THIS* TIME?
NO--
--I'LL TELL YOU WHATEVER YOU WANT TO KNOW.
THIS THE PLACE, VIV?
THESE ARE THE COORDINATES.
IT IS HEAVILY FORTIFIED--THIS WILL NOT BE EASY.
IT NEVER IS, NADIA. BUT REMEMBER, EVERYBODY--
--THIS IS A *RESCUE* MISSION, NOT AN *ATTACK*. IN AND OUT. QUIETLY.
YEAH. DON'T FORGET TO MUTE YOUR PHONE, SPIDEY.
*ONE* TIME. THAT WAS *ONE TIME*.
WHAT WERE YOU DOING WHEN WE CAUGHT YOU?!
PFFT--I TOLD YOU I WOULD COOPERATE...
THAT DOESN'T MEAN WE DON'T GET TO PUNCH YOU. NOW, THE QUESTION--
YOU ALREADY KNOW--


--TRYING TO STEAL A HYDRA TRANSPORT SHIP FOR A PLANNED OPERATION.
HM. AND WHO WERE YOU PLANNING THIS OPERATION WITH?
"CHILDREN, MOSTLY. I CAN GIVE YOU THEIR NAMES."
I SEE. AND WHAT WAS THE *OBJECTIVE* OF THIS OPERATION?
OH, THAT'S MY FAVORITE PART...
...WE ARE GOING TO *KILL* CAPTAIN AMERICA.
YOU INSOLENT--!
WAIT!
SOMETHING IS WRONG HERE.
WHY ARE YOU TELLING US ALL THIS?
BECAUSE, VIPER--


"--WHAT I AM DOING HERE SHOULD NOT BE YOUR CONCERN."
IT'S WHAT *YOU* ARE DOING HERE THAT I'D WORRY ABOUT, IF I WERE YOU. WITH THE OLD MEN IN SUITS AND THEIR BRIEFCASES OF MONEY.
WHAT WOULD YOUR SUPREME LEADER SAY IF HE FOUND OUT YOU WERE RUNNING THIS ILLEGAL AND UNSANCTIONED NARCOTICS ENTERPRISE RIGHT UNDER HIS NOSE?
YOU'RE PROFITING OFF HIS REGIME AT AN *AWFULLY* TIDY MARGIN. I IMAGINE HE'D WANT TO MAKE AN *ESPECIALLY* VIOLENT EXAMPLE OUT OF YOU, YES?
I'VE TAKEN CERTAIN PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES, WAYS TO ENSURE HE'LL BE BROUGHT UP TO SPEED IF SOMETHING HAPPENS TO ME. OR, ALTERNATIVELY--
--YOU COULD *HELP* US. NOT ONLY WOULD YOU BE SPARED STEVE ROGERS' WRATH, BUT IF WE WERE TO SUCCEED...
...WELL, *SOMEONE* WOULD HAVE TO LEAD THIS REMARKABLY RESURGENT HYDRA IN THE EVENT OF HIS DEATH. WHO BETTER THAN THE *TRUE* MADAME HYDRA?
WHAT DO YOU SAY, OPHELIA?
ONE MOMENT--
"--WHAT DO YOU NEED FROM ME, THEN?"


JUST SENT YOU THE ACCESS CODE AND HAND SCAN, IRONHEART--
WAY AHEAD OF YOU NAT.
SHE TELL YOU WHO THIS DUDE IS?
NOPE. JUST SAID HE WAS IMPORTANT. THAT HE'D BE THE ONE--
--WHO WOULD WIN US THE WAR.
H-HELP ME...
UH, NAT-- I THINK WE GOT THE WRONG ROOM OR SOMETHING-- THIS AIN'T OUR GUY...
OH, IT'S HIM, FALCON. TRUST ME.
NOW-- ABOUT THAT TRANSPORT SHIP...

# SECRET EMPIRE

Steve Rogers, a.k.a. Captain America, has claimed the United States for Hydra. The handful of heroes who escaped his initial attack discovered that a Cosmic Cube was behind Rogers' sinister change of heart, and might be able to change him back--if the scattered pieces can be reunited.

Tony Stark's team has now acquired two cube shards using a detection device Stark invented, but Captain America is hot on their trail--and intends to use the restored cube to rewrite the world in Hydra's image.

Meanwhile, Emma Frost is using her own cube shard to rule the mutant homeland of New Tian from the shadows--and Black Widow and her team of young heroes are closing in on Steve Rogers.

Writer ▪ Nick Spencer Artist ▪ Andrea Sorrentino
Additional Art ▪ Rod Reis; Joshua Cassara & Rachelle Rosenberg
Letterer ▪ VC's Travis Lanham
Recap Page Art ▪ Andrea Sorrentino
Cover ▪ Mark Brooks
Variant Covers ▪ John Tyler Christopher; Dan Mora & Edgar Delgado; Andrea Sorrentino

Production Design ▪ Carlos Lao Assistant Editor ▪ Alanna Smith
Editor ▪ Tom Brevoort Editor in Chief ▪ Axel Alonso
Chief Creative Officer ▪ Joe Quesada President ▪ Dan Buckley
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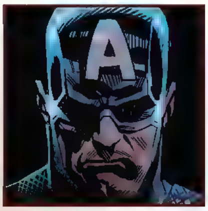
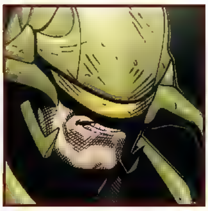
# HYDRA

HYDRA COMMAND


CAPTAIN AMERICA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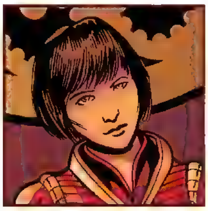
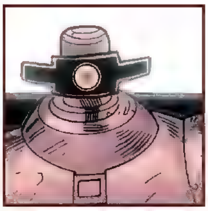
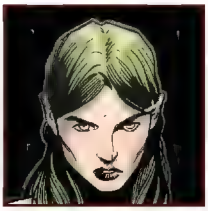

MADAME HYDRA


ARNIM ZOLA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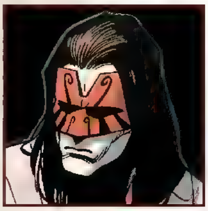
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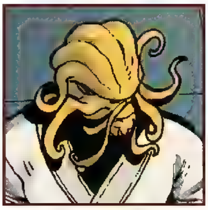
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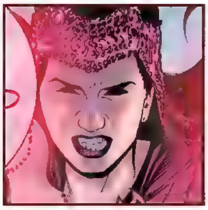
AVENGERS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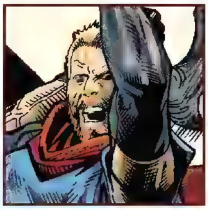
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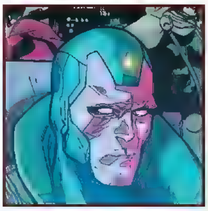
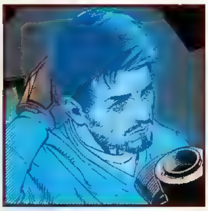
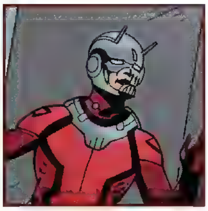

VISION

# THE UNDERGROUND


TONY STARK (A.I.)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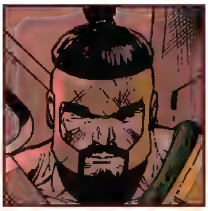
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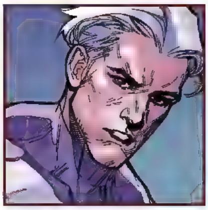
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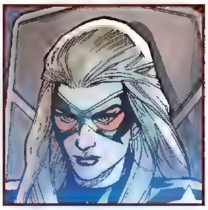
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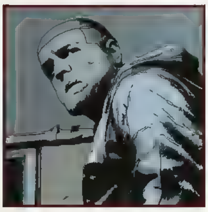
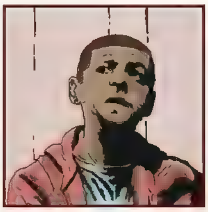

SAM WILSON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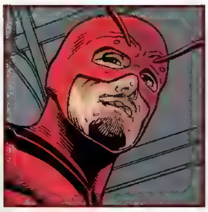
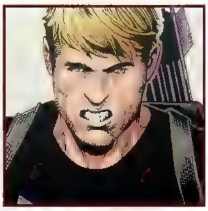
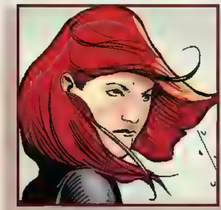
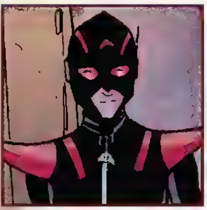

GIANT-MAN


HAWKEYE

# THE RED ROOM


BLACK WIDOW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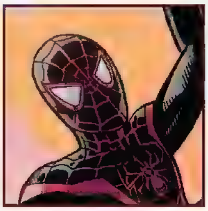
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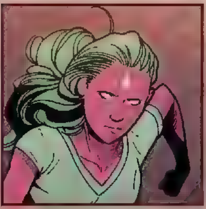
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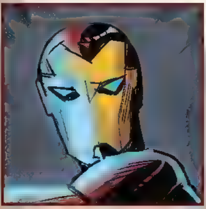
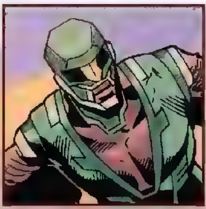
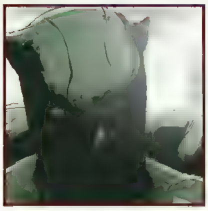
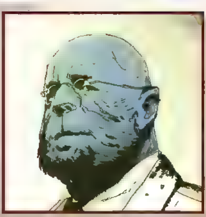

IRONHEART

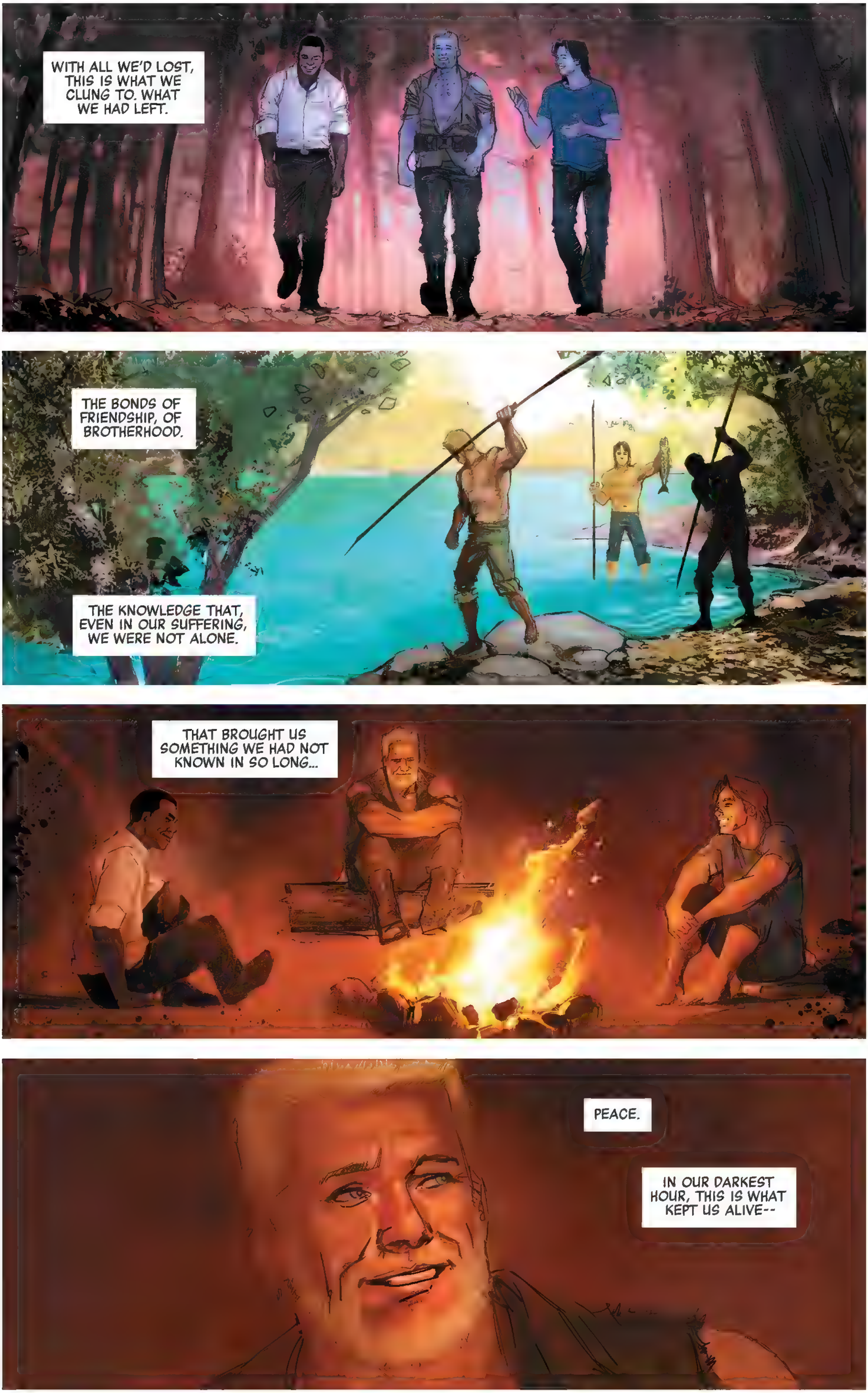

FALCON

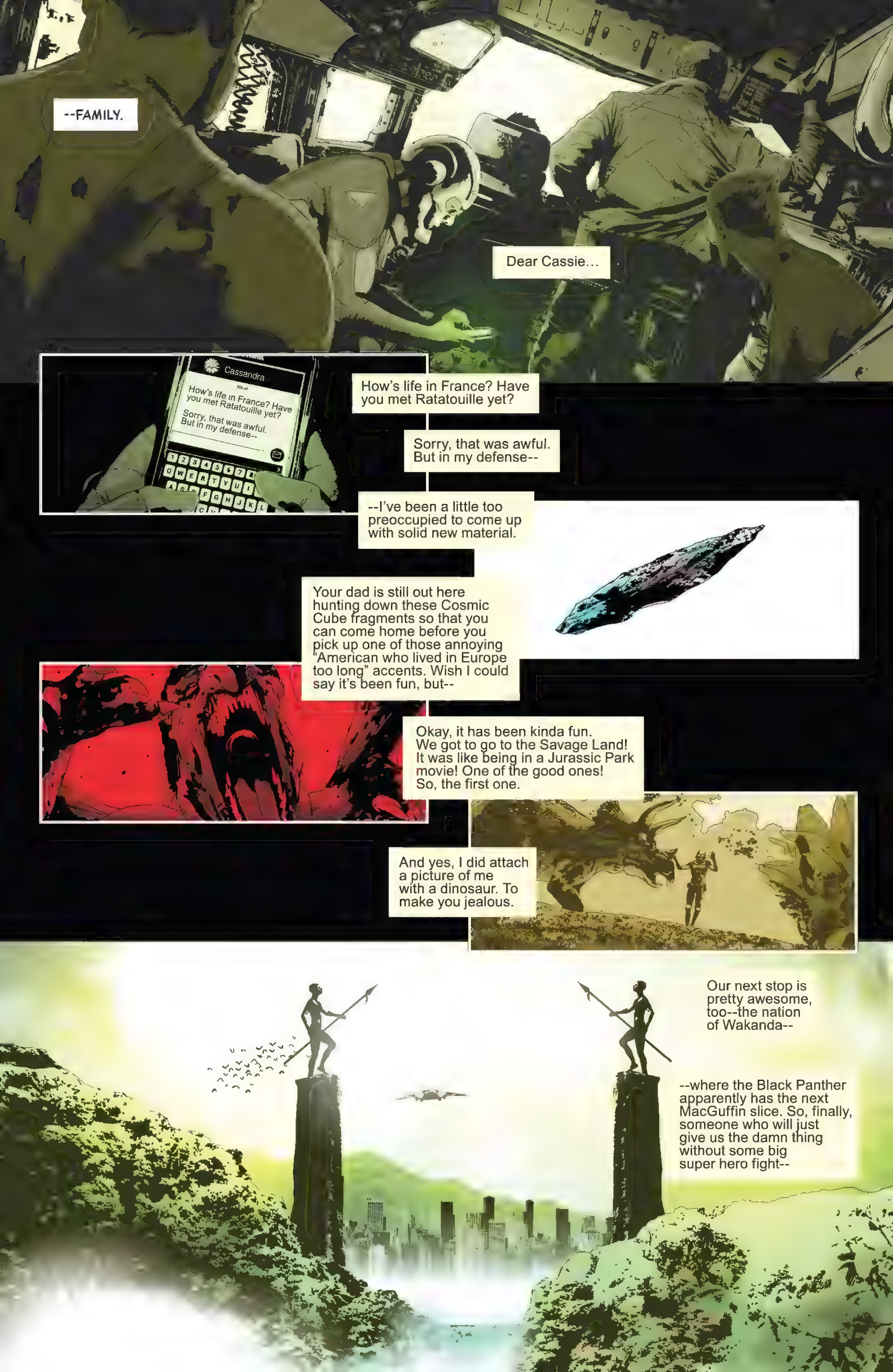
# WAKANDA

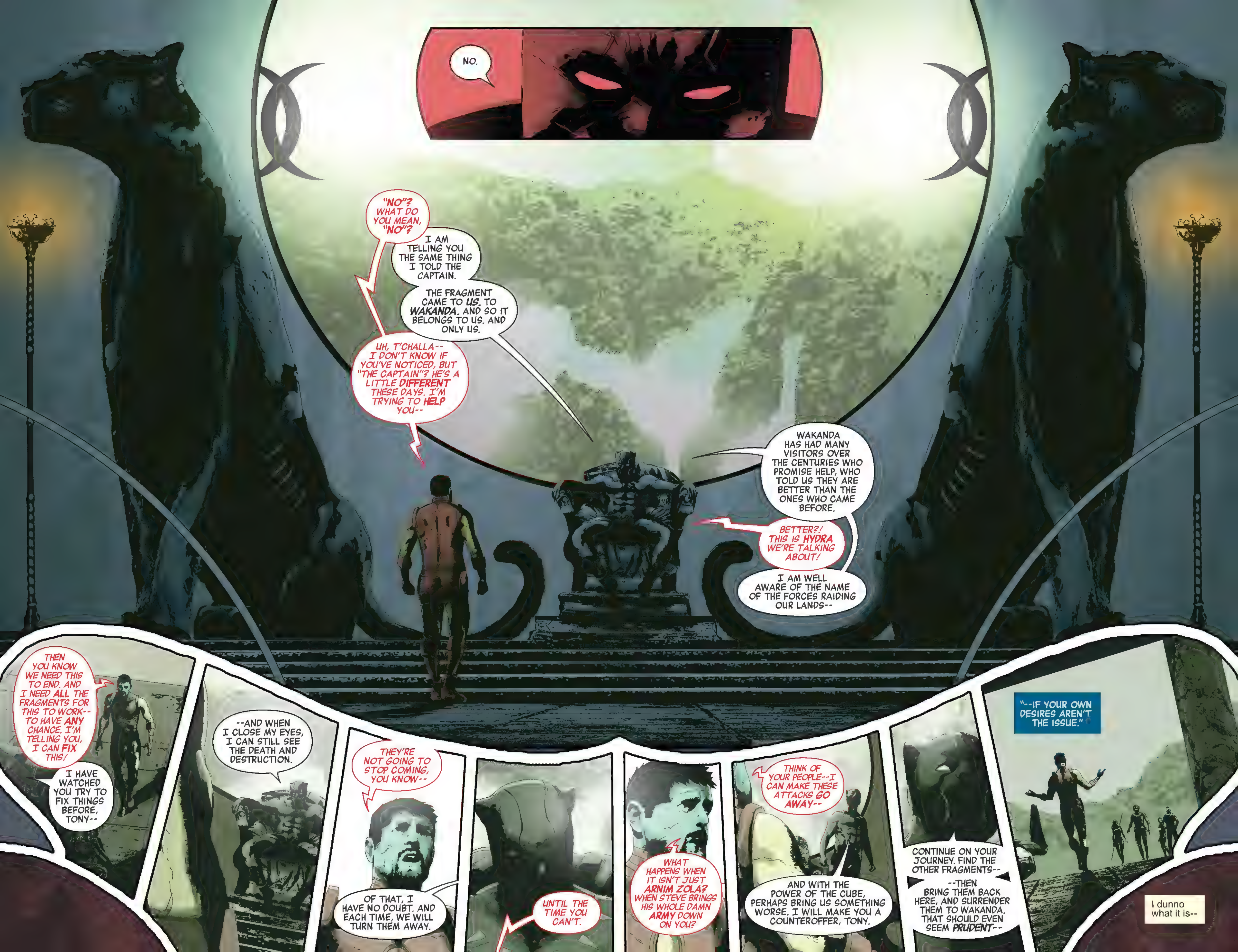

BLACK PANTHER

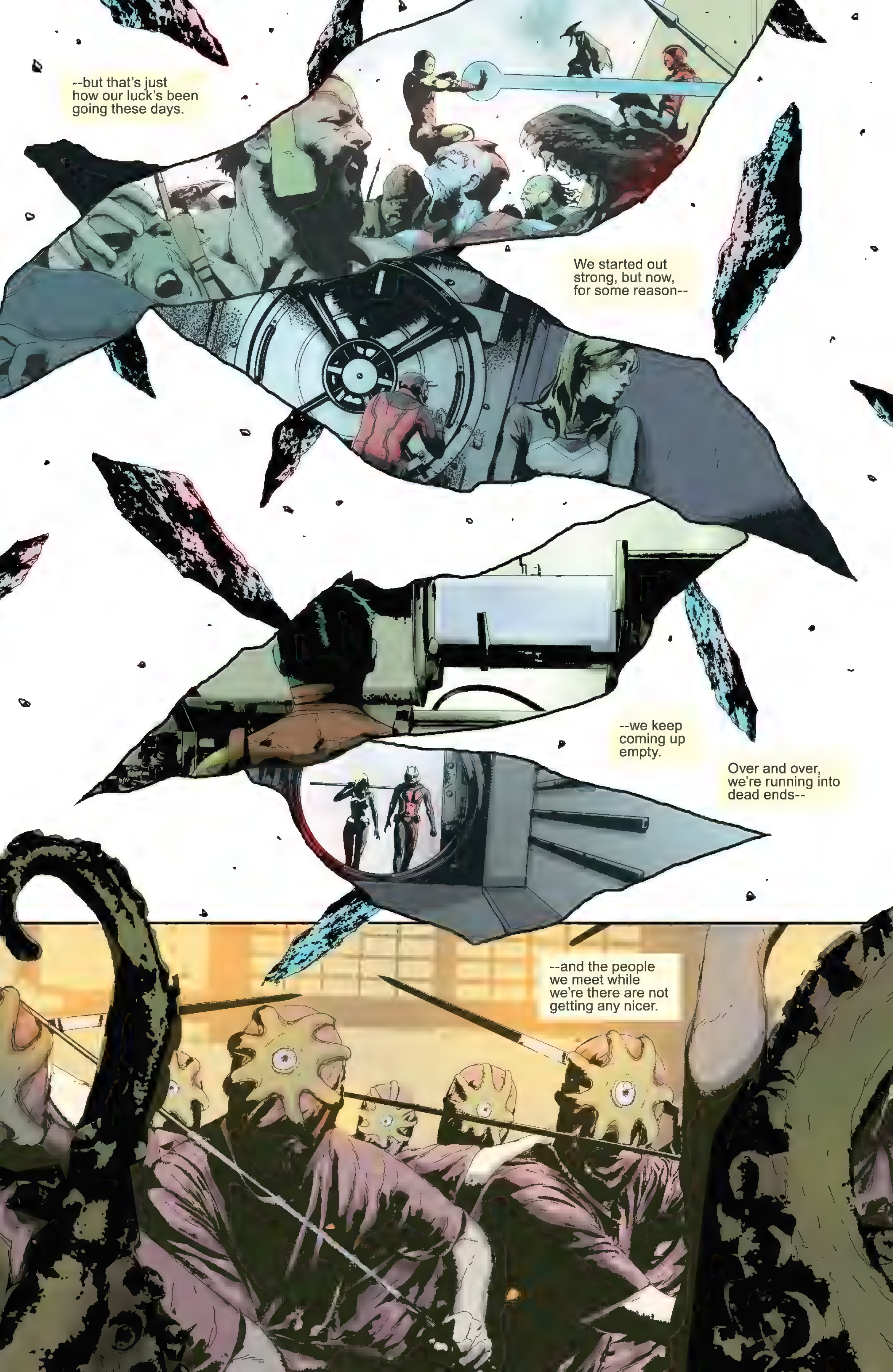
# NEW TIAN

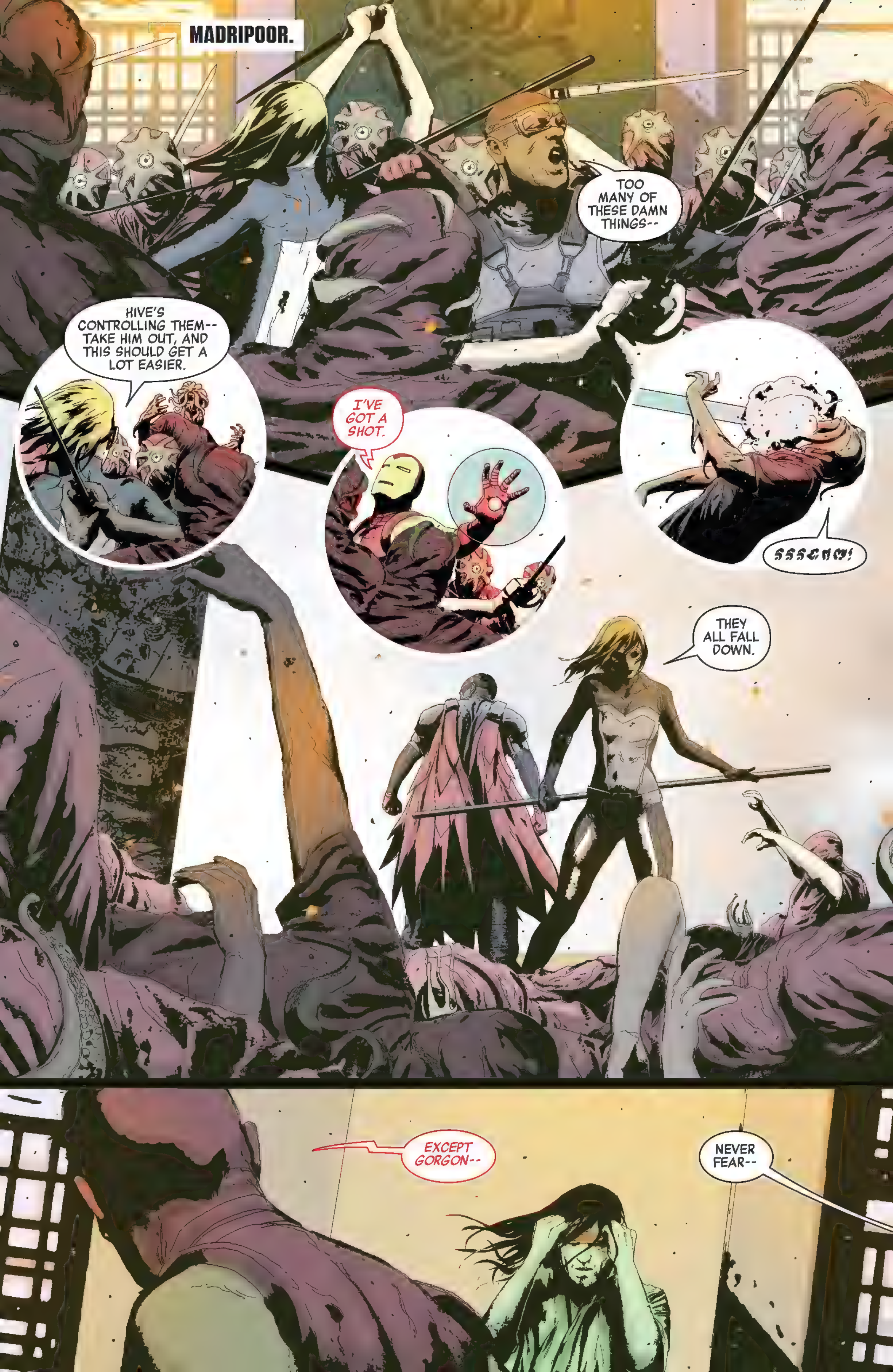

BEAST

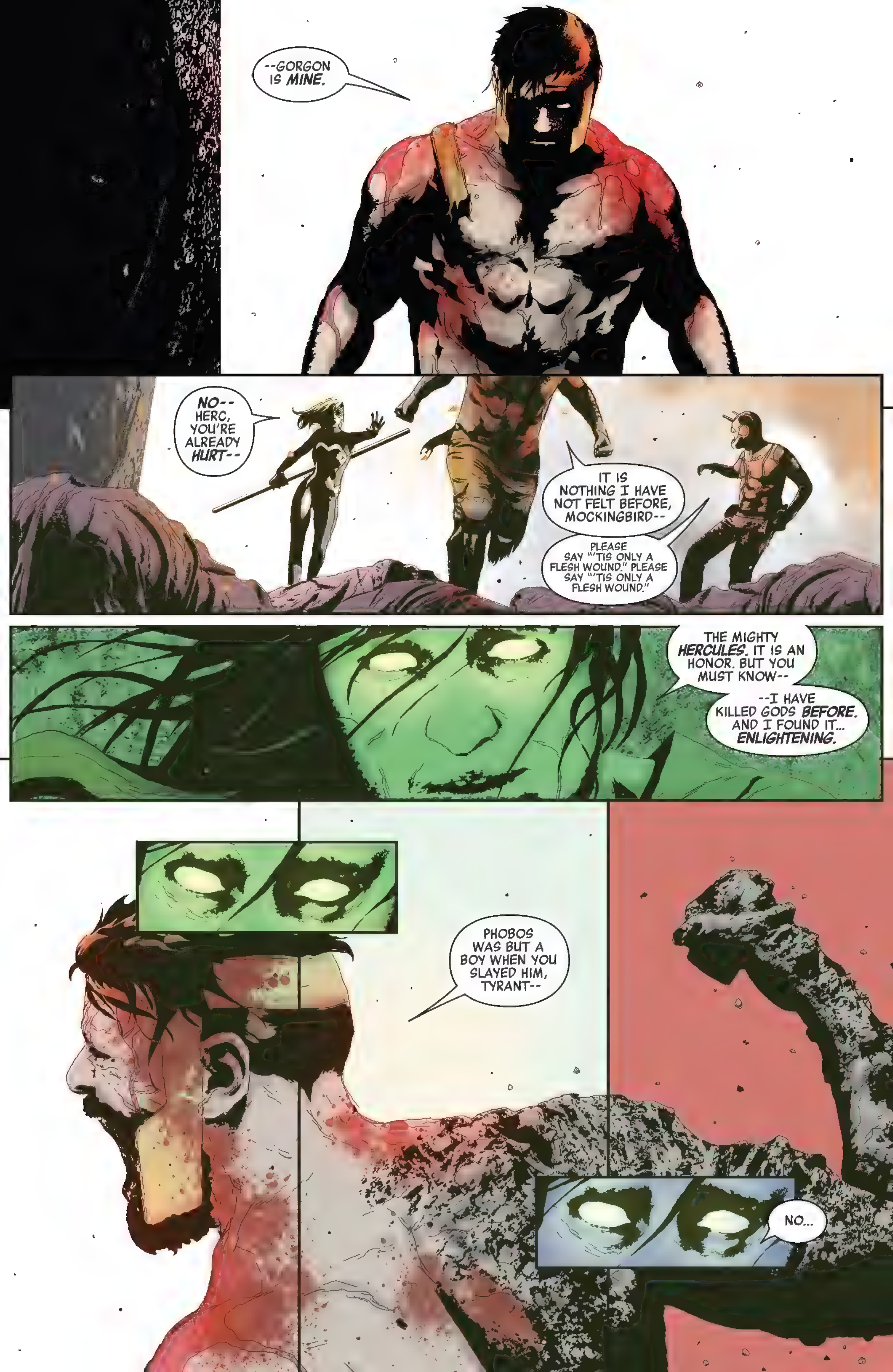

WITH ALL WE'D LOST, THIS IS WHAT WE CLUNG TO. WHAT WE HAD LEFT.
THE BONDS OF FRIENDSHIP, OF BROTHERHOOD.
THE KNOWLEDGE THAT, EVEN IN OUR SUFFERING, WE WERE NOT ALONE.
THAT BROUGHT US SOMETHING WE HAD NOT KNOWN IN SO LONG...
PEACE.
IN OUR DARKEST HOUR, THIS IS WHAT KEPT US ALIVE--

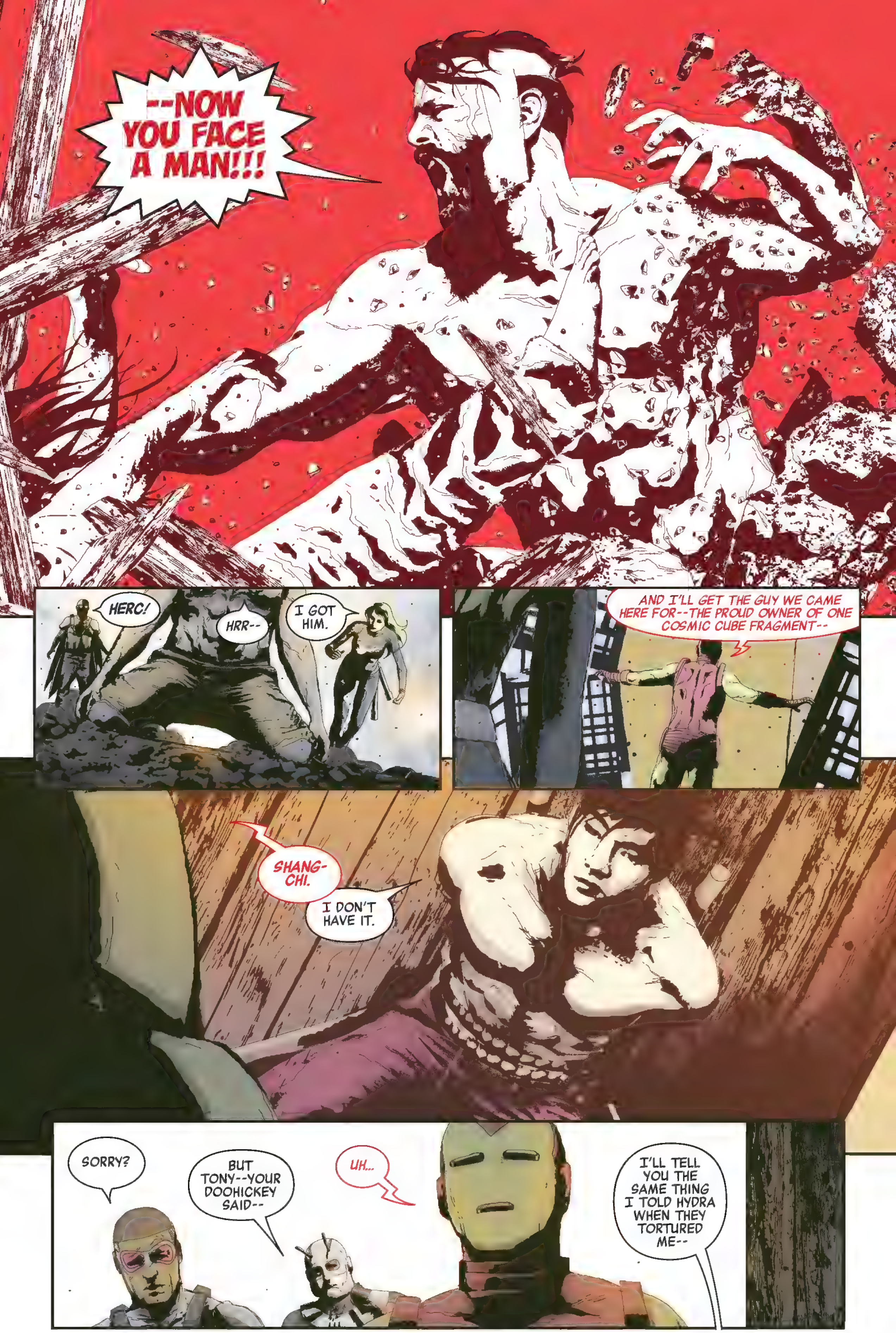

--FAMILY.
Dear Cassie...
Cassandra
How's life in France? Have you met Ratatouille yet?
Sorry, that was awful. But in my defense--
How's life in France? Have you met Ratatouille yet?
Sorry, that was awful. But in my defense--
--I've been a little too preoccupied to come up with solid new material.
Your dad is still out here hunting down these Cosmic Cube fragments so that you can come home before you pick up one of those annoying "American who lived in Europe too long" accents. Wish I could say it's been fun, but--
Okay, it has been kinda fun. We got to go to the Savage Land! It was like being in a Jurassic Park movie! One of the good ones! So, the first one.
And yes, I did attach a picture of me with a dinosaur. To make you jealous.
Our next stop is pretty awesome, too--the nation of Wakanda--
--where the Black Panther apparently has the next MacGuffin slice. So, finally, someone who will just give us the damn thing without some big super hero fight--

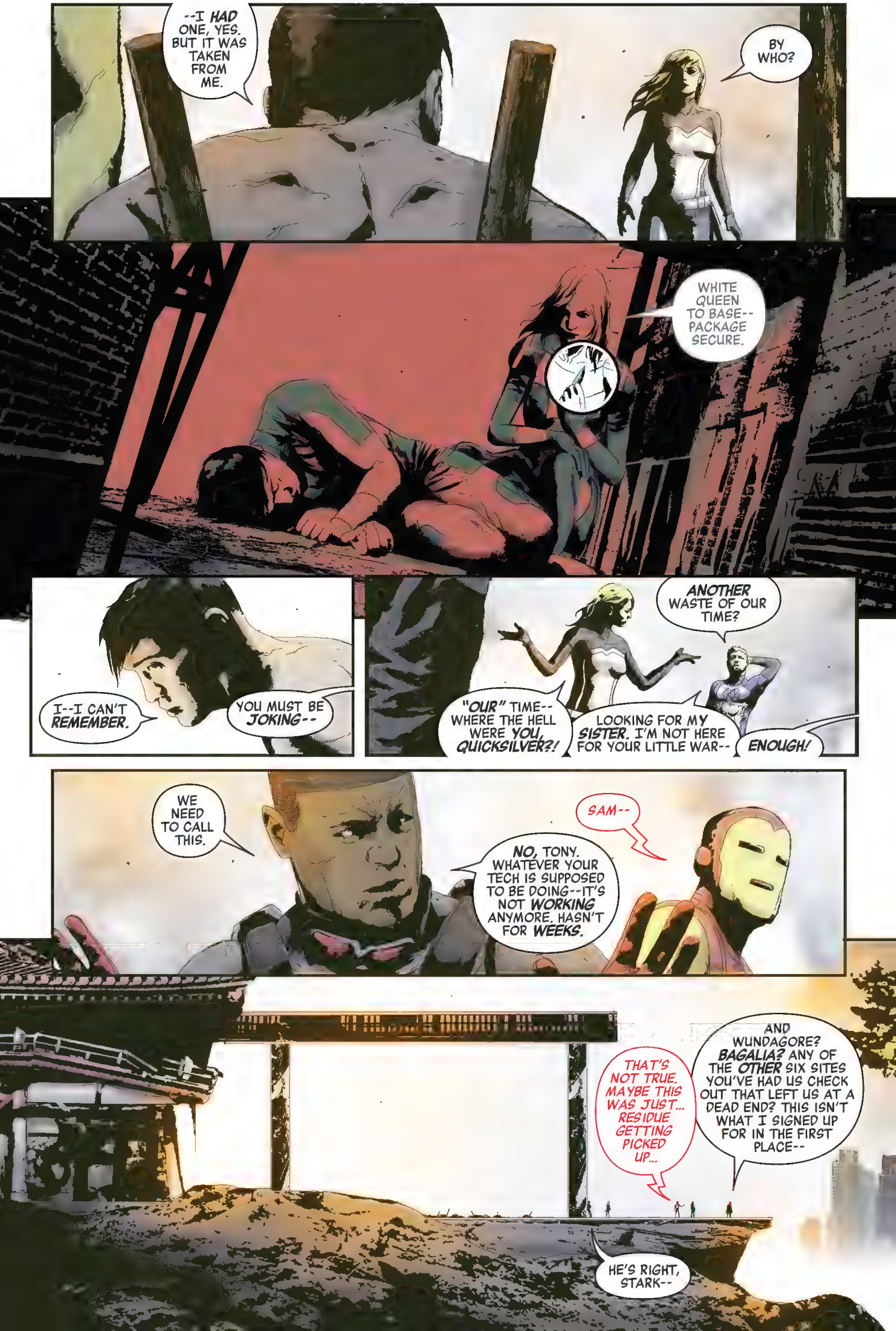

NO.
"NO"? WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "NO"?
I AM TELLING YOU THE SAME THING I TOLD THE CAPTAIN.
THE FRAGMENT CAME TO US. TO WAKANDA. AND SO IT BELONGS TO US. AND ONLY US.
UH, T'CHALLA-- I DON'T KNOW IF YOU'VE NOTICED, BUT "THE CAPTAIN"? HE'S A LITTLE DIFFERENT THESE DAYS. I'M TRYING TO HELP YOU--
WAKANDA HAS HAD MANY VISITORS OVER THE CENTURIES WHO PROMISE HELP, WHO TOLD US THEY ARE BETTER THAN THE ONES WHO CAME BEFORE.
BETTER?! THIS IS HYDRA WE'RE TALKING ABOUT!
I AM WELL AWARE OF THE NAME OF THE FORCES RAIDING OUR LANDS--
THEN YOU KNOW WE NEED THIS TO END. AND I NEED ALL THE FRAGMENTS FOR THIS TO WORK-- TO HAVE ANY CHANCE. I'M TELLING YOU, I CAN FIX THIS!
I HAVE WATCHED YOU TRY TO FIX THINGS BEFORE, TONY--
--AND WHEN I CLOSE MY EYES, I CAN STILL SEE THE DEATH AND DESTRUCTION.
THEY'RE NOT GOING TO STOP COMING, YOU KNOW--
OF THAT, I HAVE NO DOUBT. AND EACH TIME, WE WILL TURN THEM AWAY.
UNTIL THE TIME YOU CAN'T.
WHAT HAPPENS WHEN IT ISN'T JUST ARNIM ZOLA? WHEN STEVE BRINGS HIS WHOLE DAMN ARMY DOWN ON YOU?
THINK OF YOUR PEOPLE--I CAN MAKE THESE ATTACKS GO AWAY--
AND WITH THE POWER OF THE CUBE, PERHAPS BRING US SOMETHING WORSE. I WILL MAKE YOU A COUNTEROFFER, TONY.
CONTINUE ON YOUR JOURNEY. FIND THE OTHER FRAGMENTS--
--THEN BRING THEM BACK HERE, AND SURRENDER THEM TO WAKANDA. THAT SHOULD EVEN SEEM PRUDENT--
"--IF YOUR OWN DESIRES AREN'T THE ISSUE."
I dunno what it is--

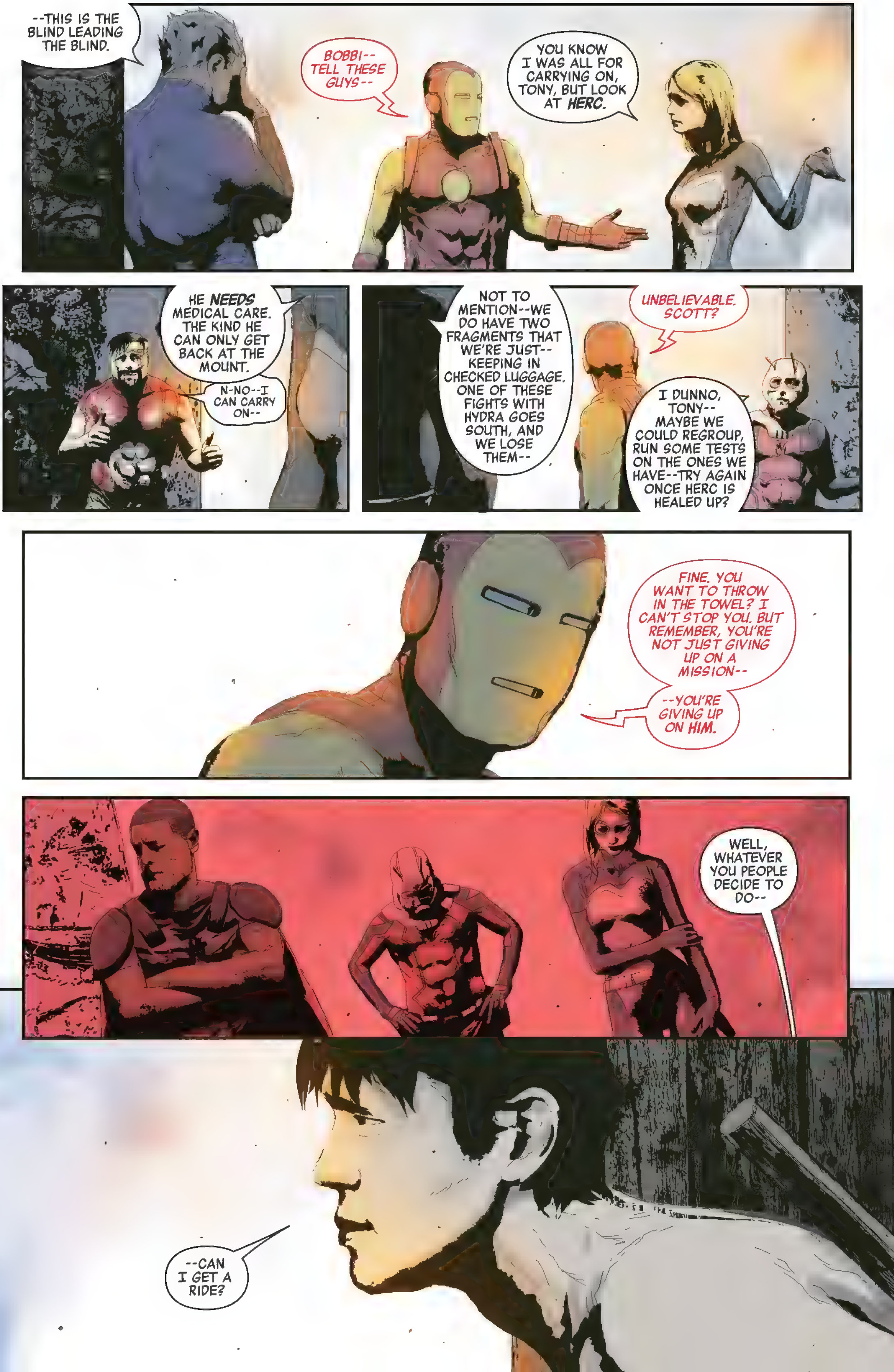

--but that's just how our luck's been going these days.
We started out strong, but now, for some reason--
--we keep coming up empty.
Over and over, we're running into dead ends--
--and the people we meet while we're there are not getting any nicer.

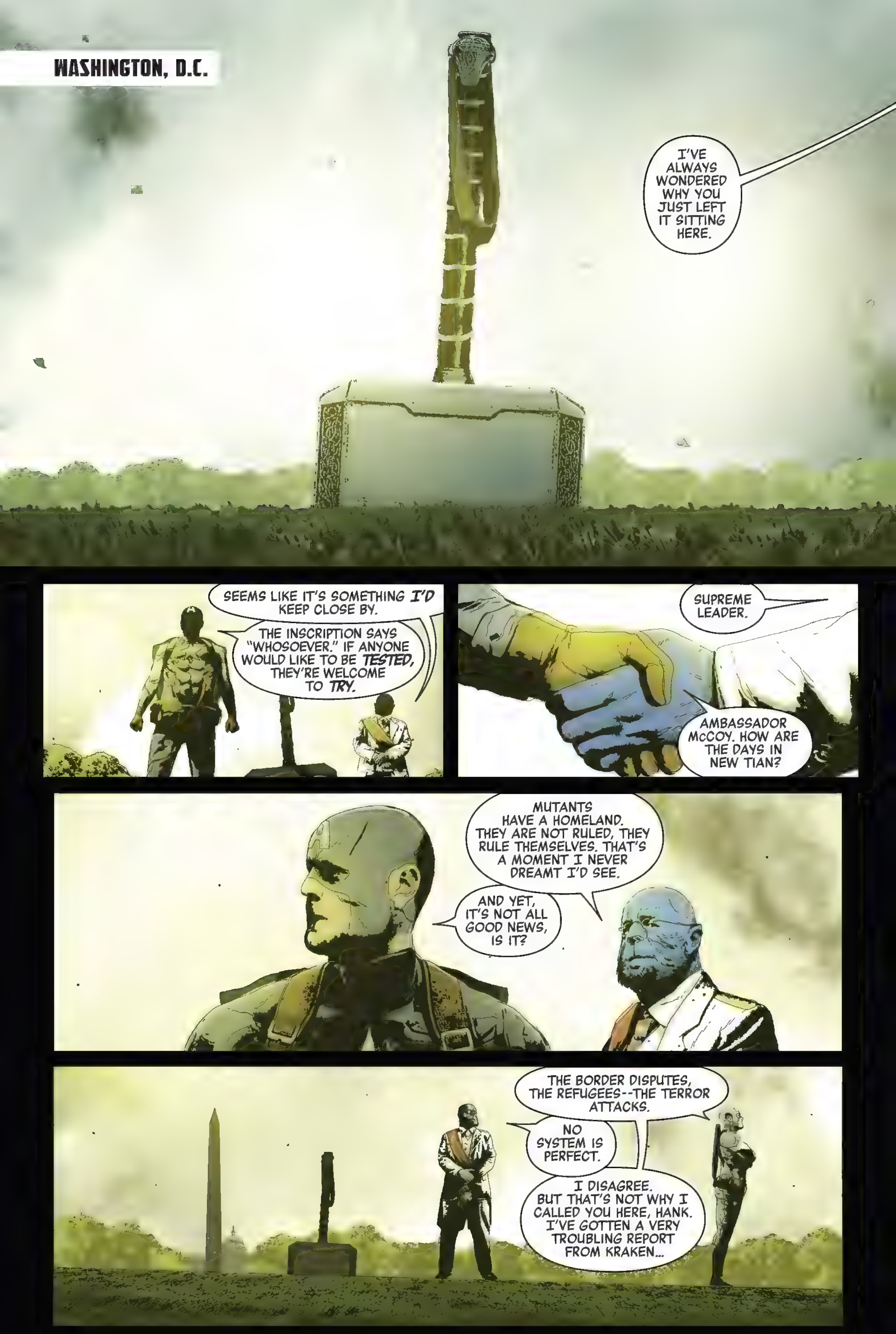

MADRIPOOR.
TOO MANY OF THESE DAMN THINGS--
HIVE'S CONTROLLING THEM-- TAKE HIM OUT, AND THIS SHOULD GET A LOT EASIER.
I'VE GOT A SHOT.
THEY ALL FALL DOWN.
EXCEPT GORGON--
NEVER FEAR--

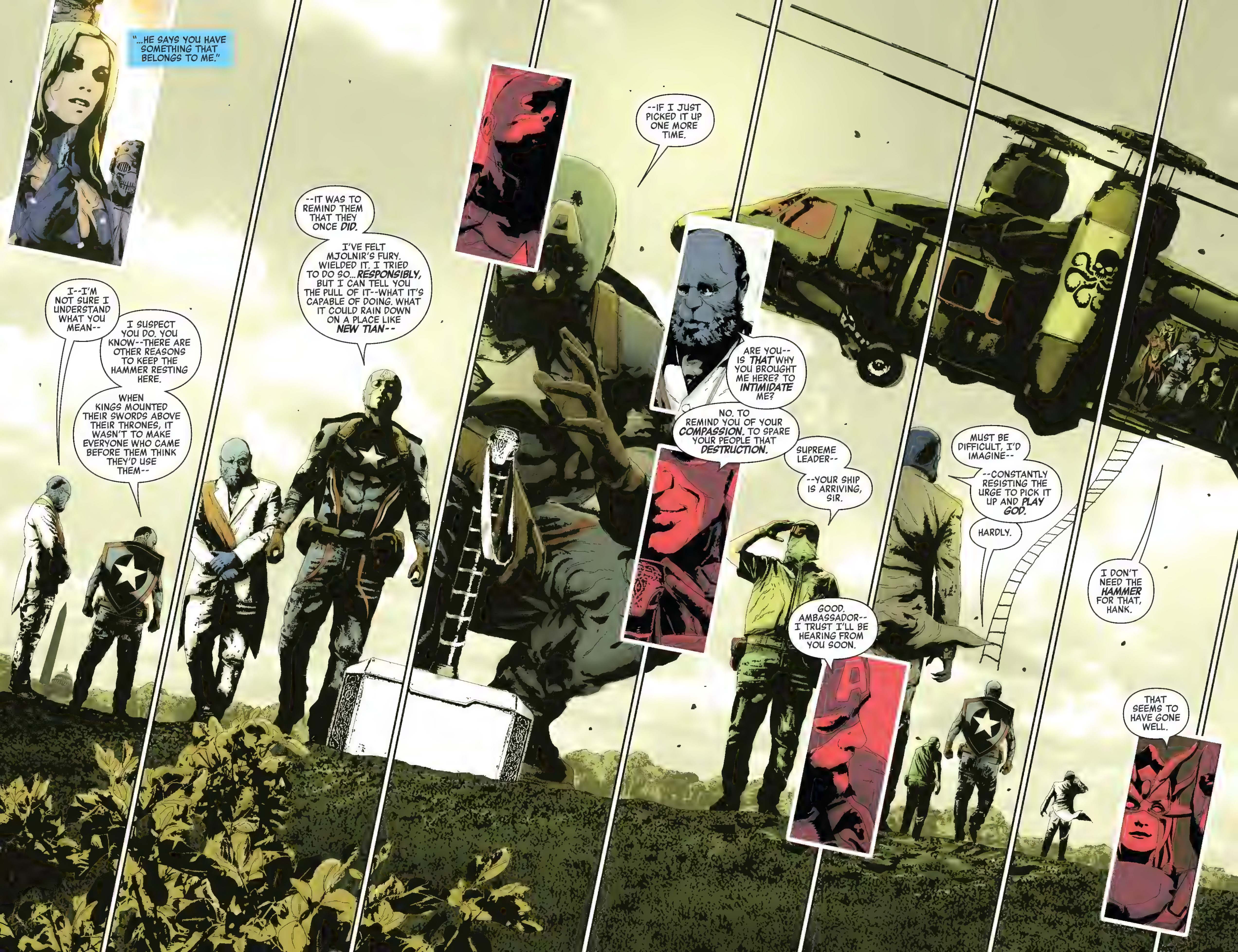

--GORGON IS *MINE.*
*NO--* HERC, YOU'RE ALREADY *HURT--*
IT IS NOTHING I HAVE NOT FELT BEFORE, MOCKINGBIRD--
PLEASE SAY "'TIS ONLY A FLESH WOUND." PLEASE SAY "'TIS ONLY A FLESH WOUND."
THE MIGHTY *HERCULES.* IT IS AN HONOR. BUT YOU MUST KNOW--
--I HAVE KILLED GODS *BEFORE.* AND I FOUND IT... *ENLIGHTENING.*
PHOBOS WAS BUT A BOY WHEN YOU SLAYED HIM, TYRANT--
NO...

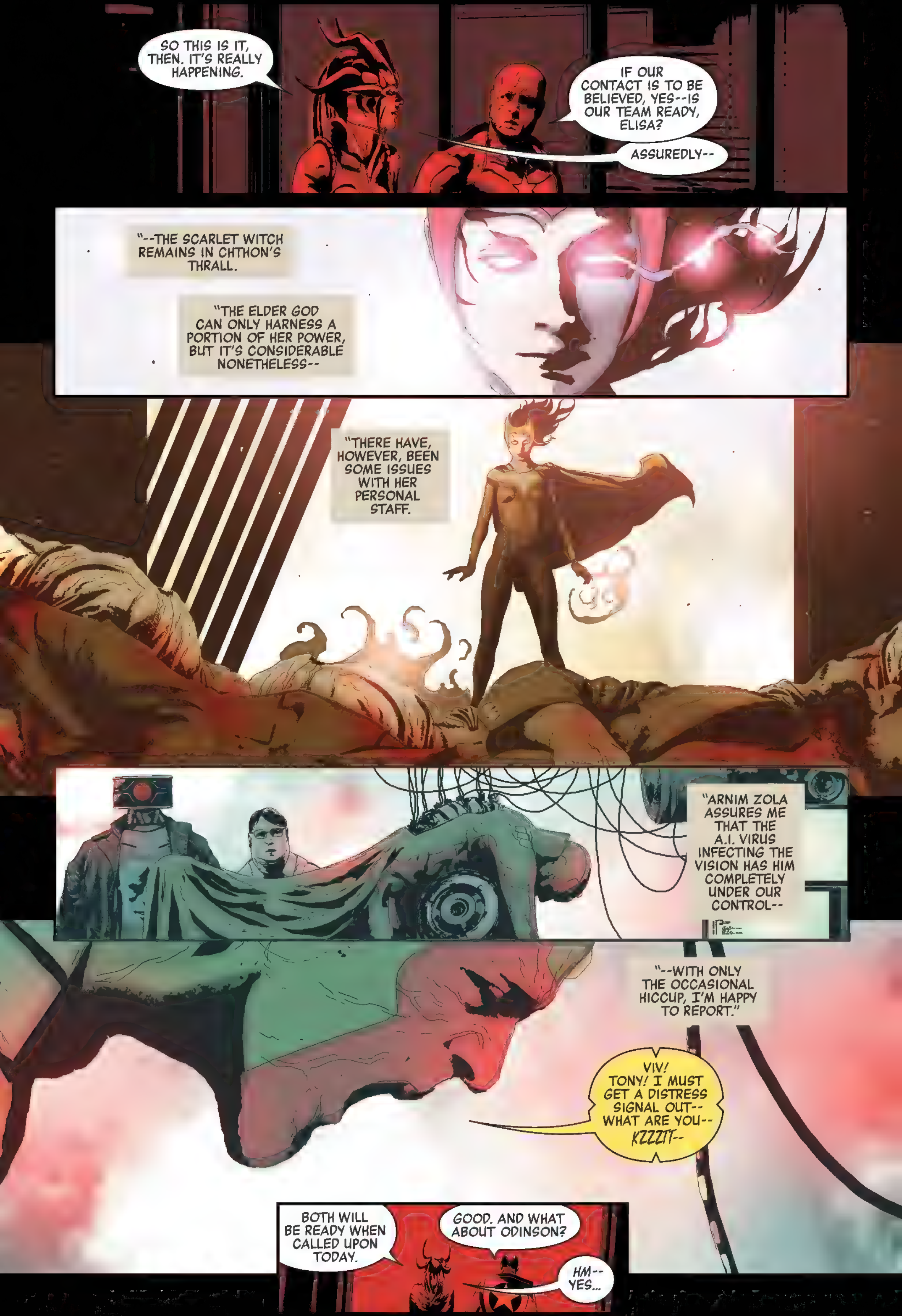

--NOW YOU FACE A MAN!!!
HERC!
HRR--
I GOT HIM.
AND I'LL GET THE GUY WE CAME HERE FOR--THE PROUD OWNER OF ONE COSMIC CUBE FRAGMENT--
SHANG-CHI.
I DON'T HAVE IT.
SORRY?
BUT TONY--YOUR DOOHICKEY SAID--
UH...
I'LL TELL YOU THE SAME THING I TOLD HYDRA WHEN THEY TORTURED ME--

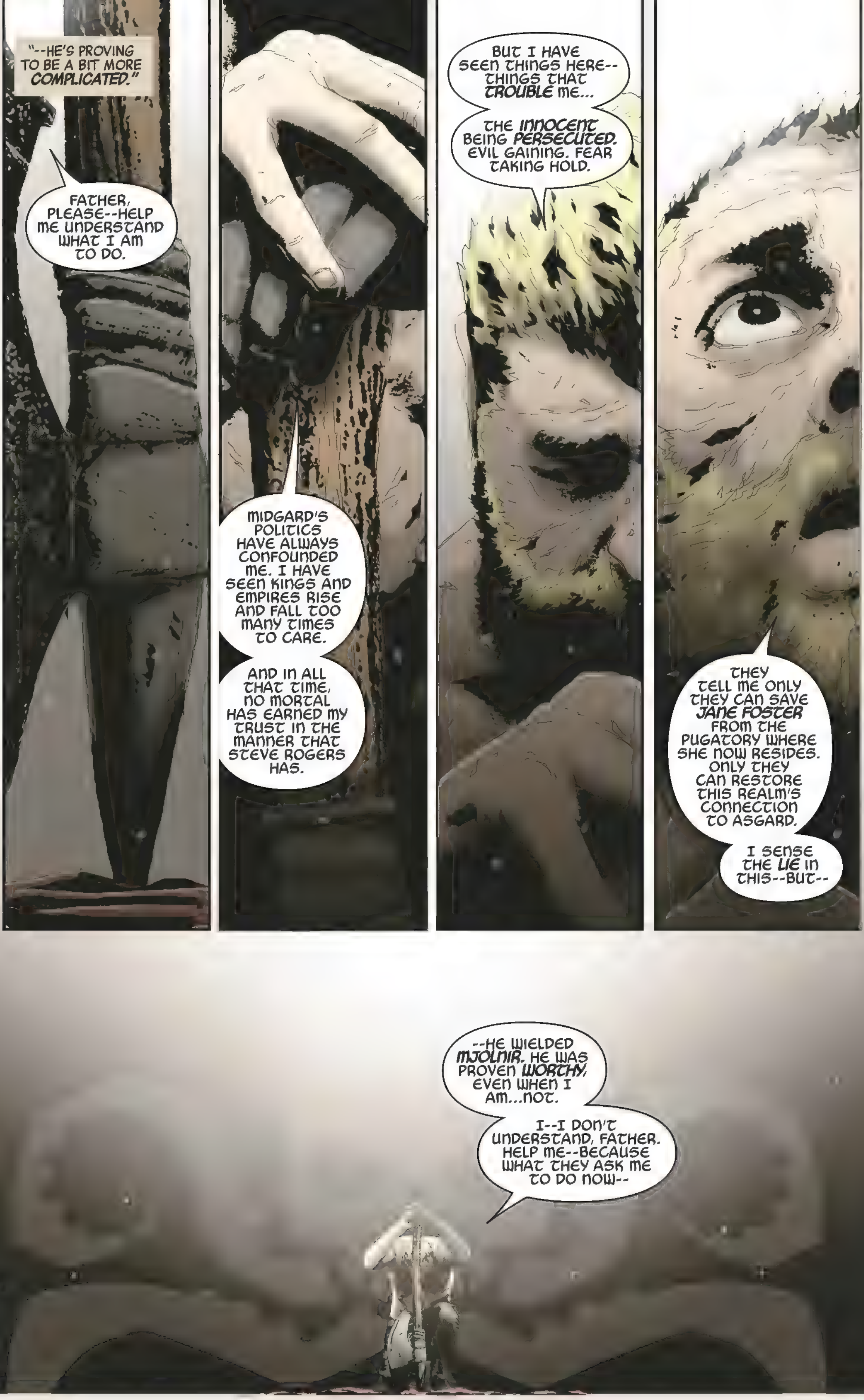

--I HAD ONE, YES. BUT IT WAS TAKEN FROM ME.
BY WHO?
WHITE QUEEN TO BASE-- PACKAGE SECURE.
I--I CAN'T REMEMBER.
YOU MUST BE JOKING--
ANOTHER WASTE OF OUR TIME?
"OUR" TIME-- WHERE THE HELL WERE YOU, QUICKSILVER?!
LOOKING FOR MY SISTER. I'M NOT HERE FOR YOUR LITTLE WAR--
ENOUGH!
WE NEED TO CALL THIS.
SAM--
NO, TONY. WHATEVER YOUR TECH IS SUPPOSED TO BE DOING--IT'S NOT WORKING ANYMORE. HASN'T FOR WEEKS.
THAT'S NOT TRUE. MAYBE THIS WAS JUST... RESIDUE GETTING PICKED UP...
AND WUNDAGORE? BAGALIA? ANY OF THE OTHER SIX SITES YOU'VE HAD US CHECK OUT THAT LEFT US AT A DEAD END? THIS ISN'T WHAT I SIGNED UP FOR IN THE FIRST PLACE--
HE'S RIGHT, STARK--

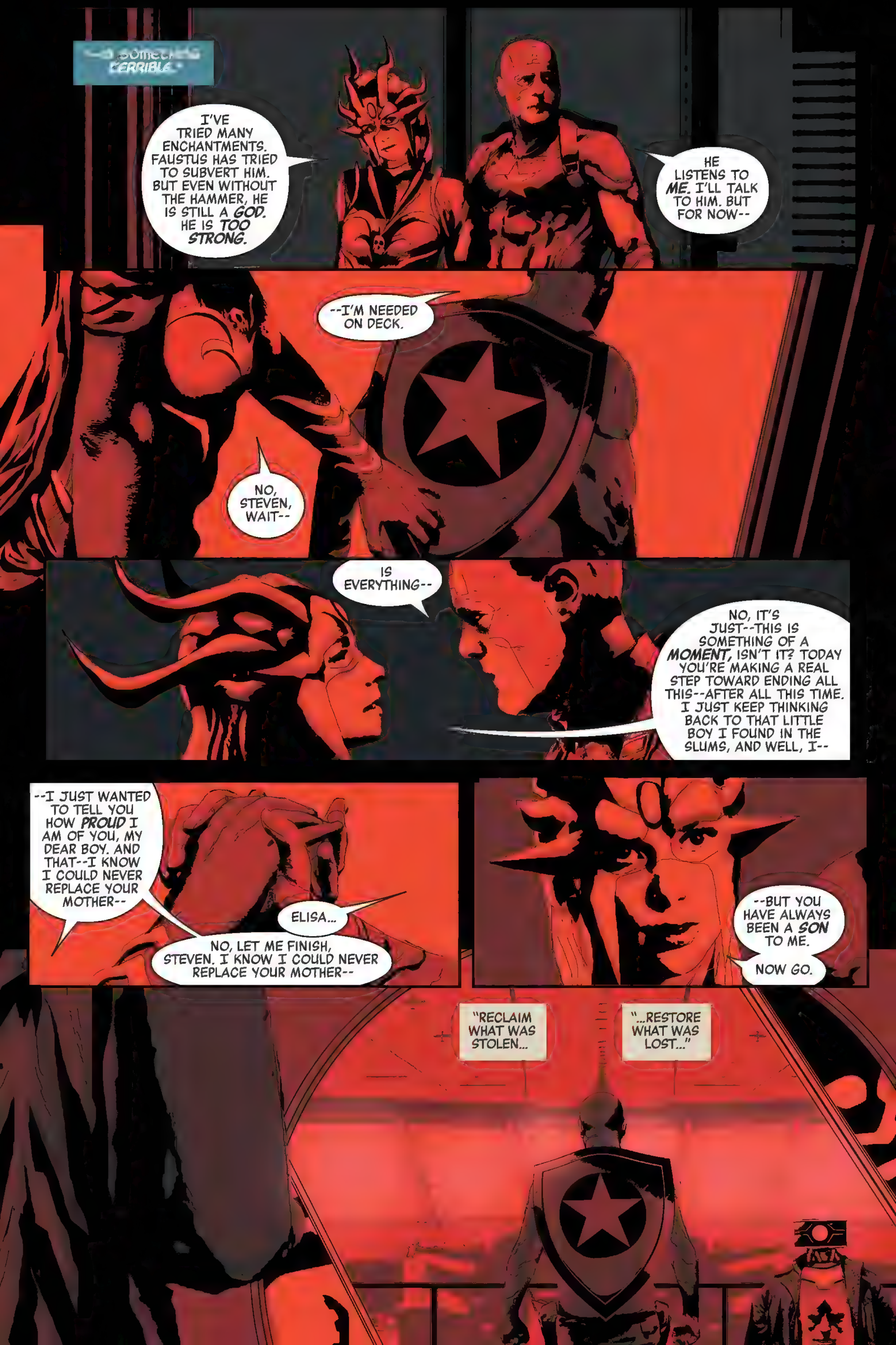

--THIS IS THE BLIND LEADING THE BLIND.
BOBBI-- TELL THESE GUYS--
YOU KNOW I WAS ALL FOR CARRYING ON, TONY, BUT LOOK AT **HERC.**
HE **NEEDS** MEDICAL CARE. THE KIND HE CAN ONLY GET BACK AT THE MOUNT.
N-NO--I CAN CARRY ON--
NOT TO MENTION--WE DO HAVE TWO FRAGMENTS THAT WE'RE JUST--KEEPING IN CHECKED LUGGAGE. ONE OF THESE FIGHTS WITH HYDRA GOES SOUTH, AND WE LOSE THEM--
UNBELIEVABLE. SCOTT?
I DUNNO, TONY-- MAYBE WE COULD REGROUP, RUN SOME TESTS ON THE ONES WE HAVE--TRY AGAIN ONCE HERC IS HEALED UP?
FINE. YOU WANT TO THROW IN THE TOWEL? I CAN'T STOP YOU. BUT REMEMBER, YOU'RE NOT JUST GIVING UP ON A MISSION--
--YOU'RE GIVING UP ON **HIM.**
WELL, WHATEVER YOU PEOPLE DECIDE TO DO--
--CAN I GET A RIDE?

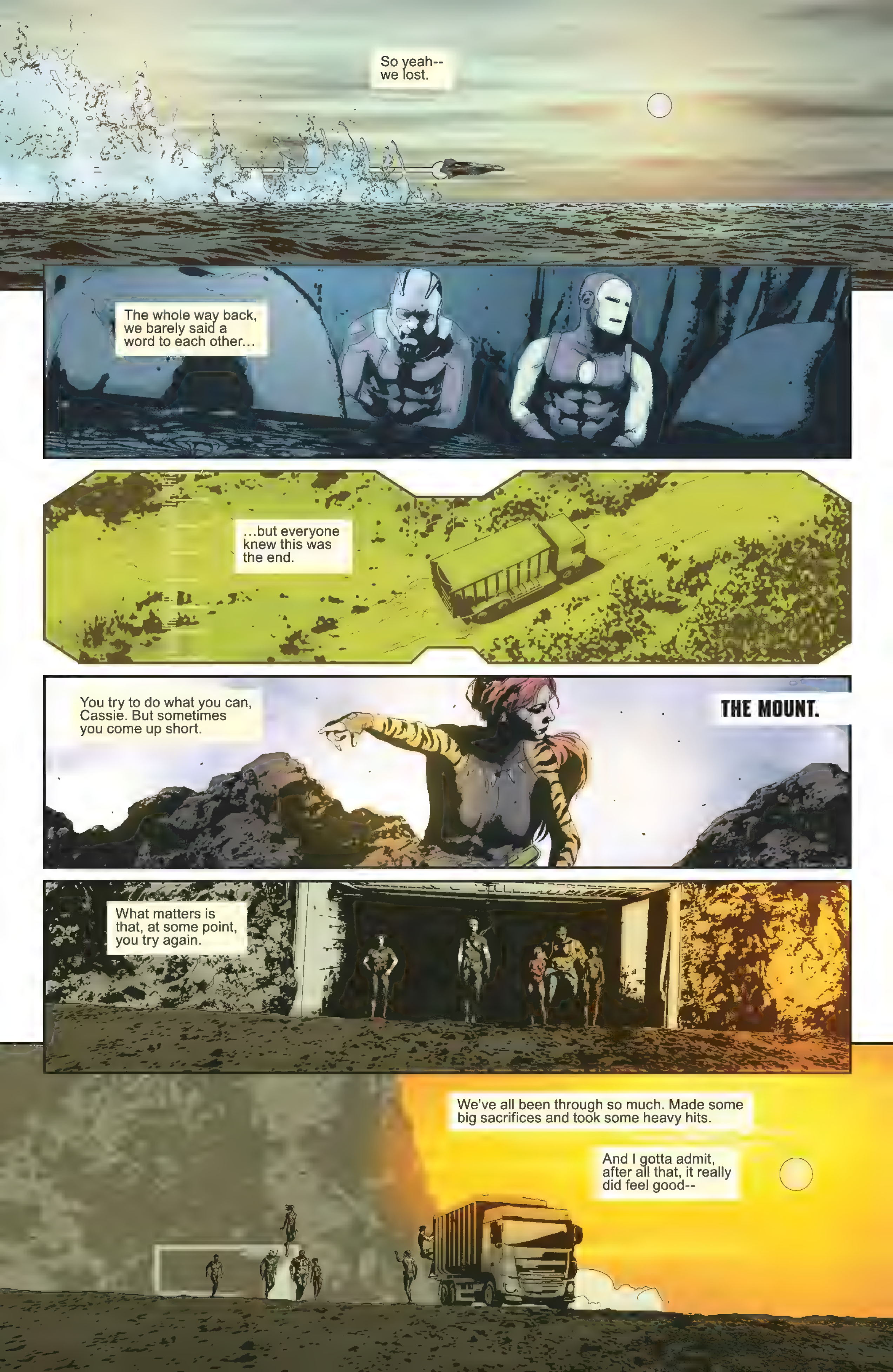

WASHINGTON, D.C.
I'VE ALWAYS WONDERED WHY YOU JUST LEFT IT SITTING HERE.
SEEMS LIKE IT'S SOMETHING *I'D* KEEP CLOSE BY.
THE INSCRIPTION SAYS "WHOSOEVER." IF ANYONE WOULD LIKE TO BE *TESTED*, THEY'RE WELCOME TO *TRY*.
SUPREME LEADER.
AMBASSADOR McCOY. HOW ARE THE DAYS IN NEW TIAN?
MUTANTS HAVE A HOMELAND. THEY ARE NOT RULED, THEY RULE THEMSELVES. THAT'S A MOMENT I NEVER DREAMT I'D SEE.
AND YET, IT'S NOT ALL GOOD NEWS, IS IT?
THE BORDER DISPUTES, THE REFUGEES--THE TERROR ATTACKS.
NO SYSTEM IS PERFECT.
I DISAGREE. BUT THAT'S NOT WHY I CALLED YOU HERE, HANK. I'VE GOTTEN A VERY TROUBLING REPORT FROM KRAKEN...

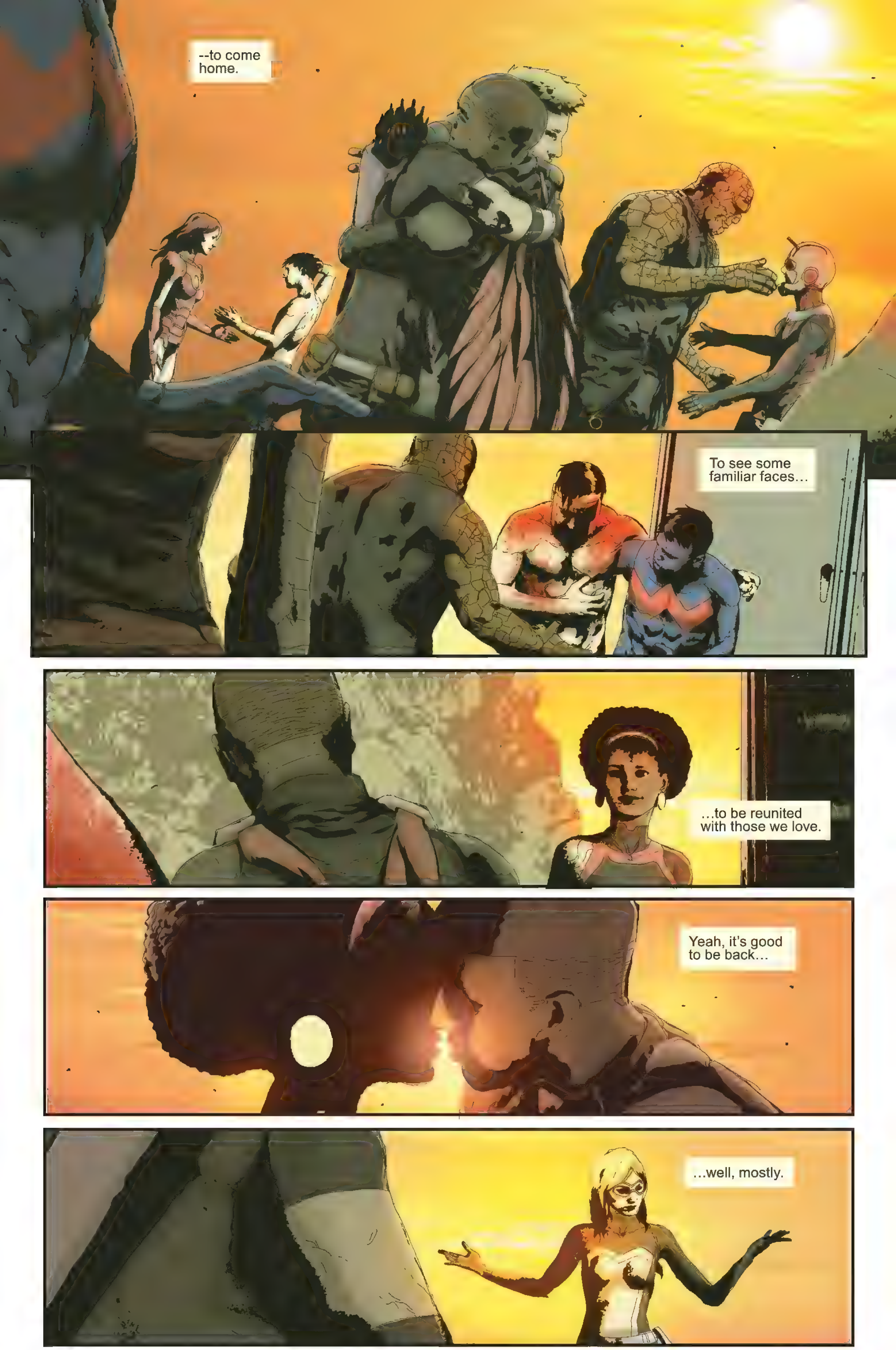

"...HE SAYS YOU HAVE SOMETHING THAT BELONGS TO ME."
I--I'M NOT SURE I UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU MEAN--
I SUSPECT YOU DO. YOU KNOW--THERE ARE OTHER REASONS TO KEEP THE HAMMER RESTING HERE.
WHEN KINGS MOUNTED THEIR SWORDS ABOVE THEIR THRONES, IT WASN'T TO MAKE EVERYONE WHO CAME BEFORE THEM THINK THEY'D USE THEM--
--IT WAS TO REMIND THEM THAT THEY ONCE DID.
I'VE FELT MJOLNIR'S FURY. WIELDED IT. I TRIED TO DO SO...RESPONSIBLY, BUT I CAN TELL YOU THE PULL OF IT--WHAT IT'S CAPABLE OF DOING. WHAT IT COULD RAIN DOWN ON A PLACE LIKE NEW TIAN--
--IF I JUST PICKED IT UP ONE MORE TIME.
ARE YOU--IS THAT WHY YOU BROUGHT ME HERE? TO INTIMIDATE ME?
NO. TO REMIND YOU OF YOUR COMPASSION. TO SPARE YOUR PEOPLE THAT DESTRUCTION.
SUPREME LEADER--
--YOUR SHIP IS ARRIVING, SIR.
GOOD. AMBASSADOR--I TRUST I'LL BE HEARING FROM YOU SOON.
MUST BE DIFFICULT, I'D IMAGINE--
--CONSTANTLY RESISTING THE URGE TO PICK IT UP AND PLAY GOD.
HARDLY.
I DON'T NEED THE HAMMER FOR THAT, HANK.
THAT SEEMS TO HAVE GONE WELL.

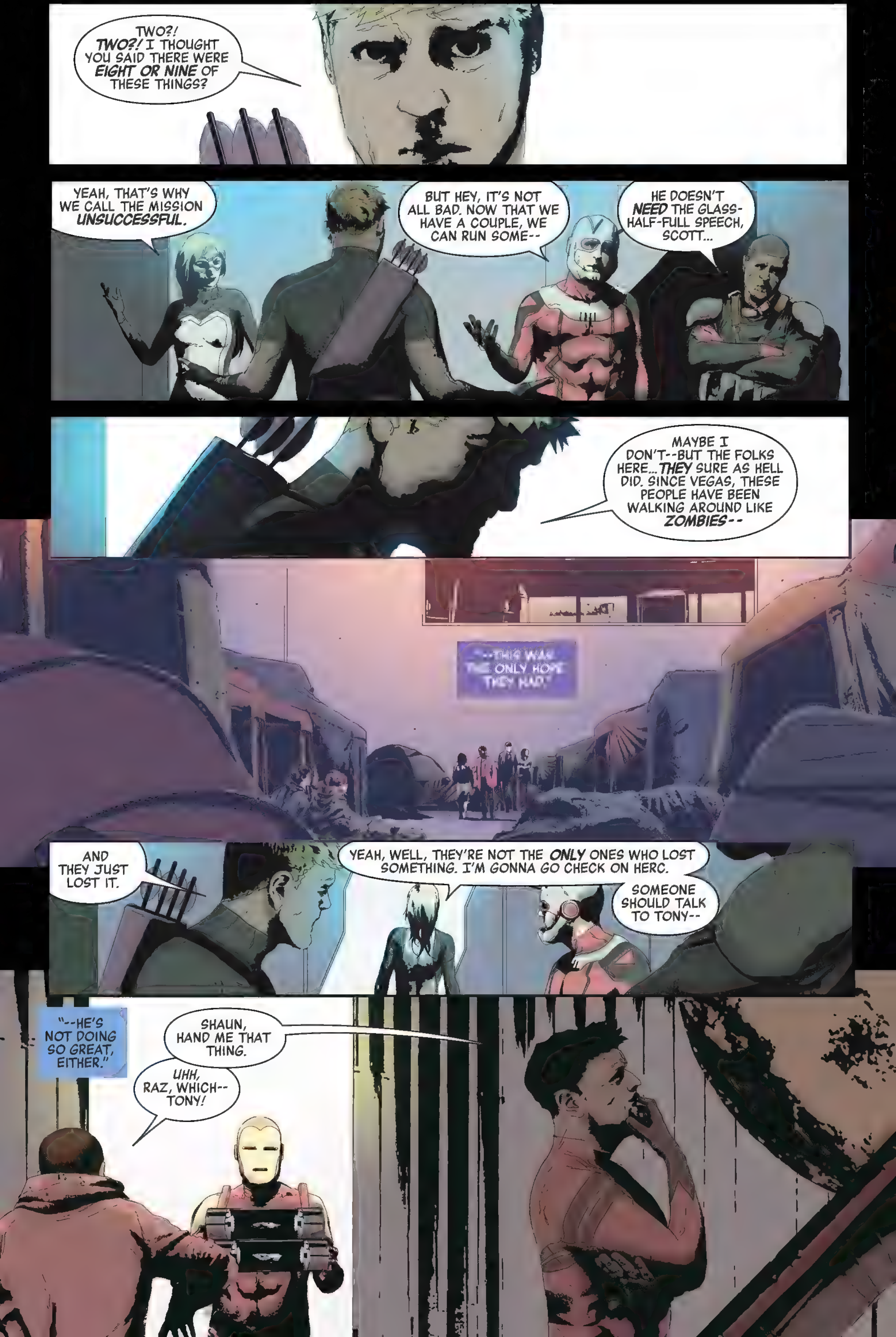

SO THIS IS IT, THEN. IT'S REALLY HAPPENING.
IF OUR CONTACT IS TO BE BELIEVED, YES--IS OUR TEAM READY, ELISA?
ASSUREDLY--
"--THE SCARLET WITCH REMAINS IN CHTHON'S THRALL.
"THE ELDER GOD CAN ONLY HARNESS A PORTION OF HER POWER, BUT IT'S CONSIDERABLE NONETHELESS--
"THERE HAVE, HOWEVER, BEEN SOME ISSUES WITH HER PERSONAL STAFF.
"ARNIM ZOLA ASSURES ME THAT THE A.I. VIRUS INFECTING THE VISION HAS HIM COMPLETELY UNDER OUR CONTROL--
"--WITH ONLY THE OCCASIONAL HICCUP, I'M HAPPY TO REPORT."
VIV! TONY! I MUST GET A DISTRESS SIGNAL OUT--WHAT ARE YOU--*KZZZTT--*
BOTH WILL BE READY WHEN CALLED UPON TODAY.
GOOD. AND WHAT ABOUT ODINSON?
HM--YES...

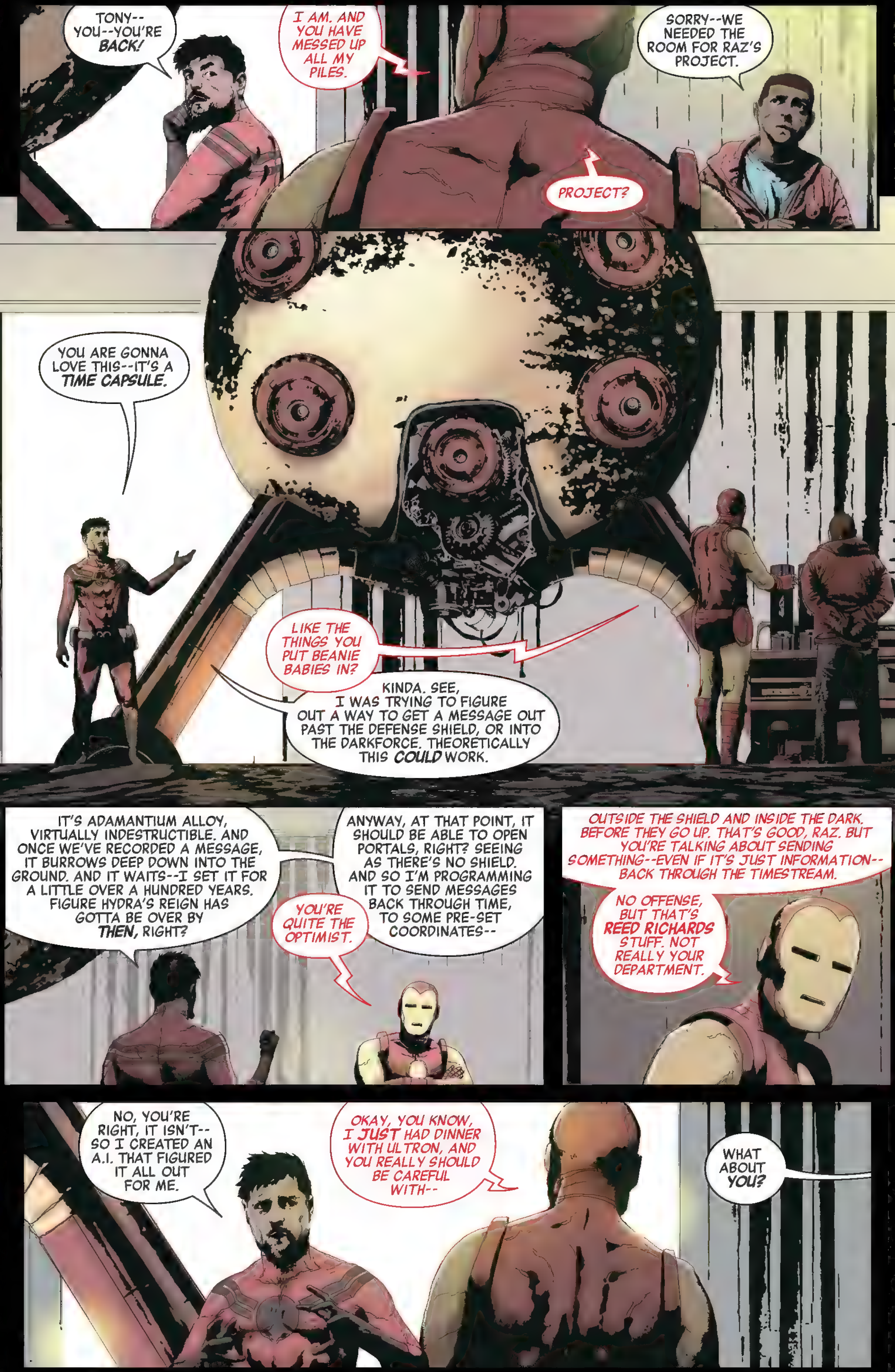

"--HE'S PROVING TO BE A BIT MORE *COMPLICATED.*"
FATHER, PLEASE--HELP ME UNDERSTAND WHAT I AM TO DO.
MIDGARD'S POLITICS HAVE ALWAYS CONFOUNDED ME. I HAVE SEEN KINGS AND EMPIRES RISE AND FALL TOO MANY TIMES TO CARE.
AND IN ALL THAT TIME, NO MORTAL HAS EARNED MY TRUST IN THE MANNER THAT STEVE ROGERS HAS.
BUT I HAVE SEEN THINGS HERE--THINGS THAT *TROUBLE* ME...
THE *INNOCENT* BEING *PERSECUTED.* EVIL GAINING. FEAR TAKING HOLD.
THEY TELL ME ONLY THEY CAN SAVE *JANE FOSTER* FROM THE PUGATORY WHERE SHE NOW RESIDES. ONLY THEY CAN RESTORE THIS REALM'S CONNECTION TO ASGARD.
I SENSE THE *LIE* IN THIS--BUT--
--HE WIELDED *MJOLNIR.* HE WAS PROVEN *WORTHY,* EVEN WHEN I AM...NOT.
I--I DON'T UNDERSTAND, FATHER. HELP ME--BECAUSE WHAT THEY ASK ME TO DO NOW--

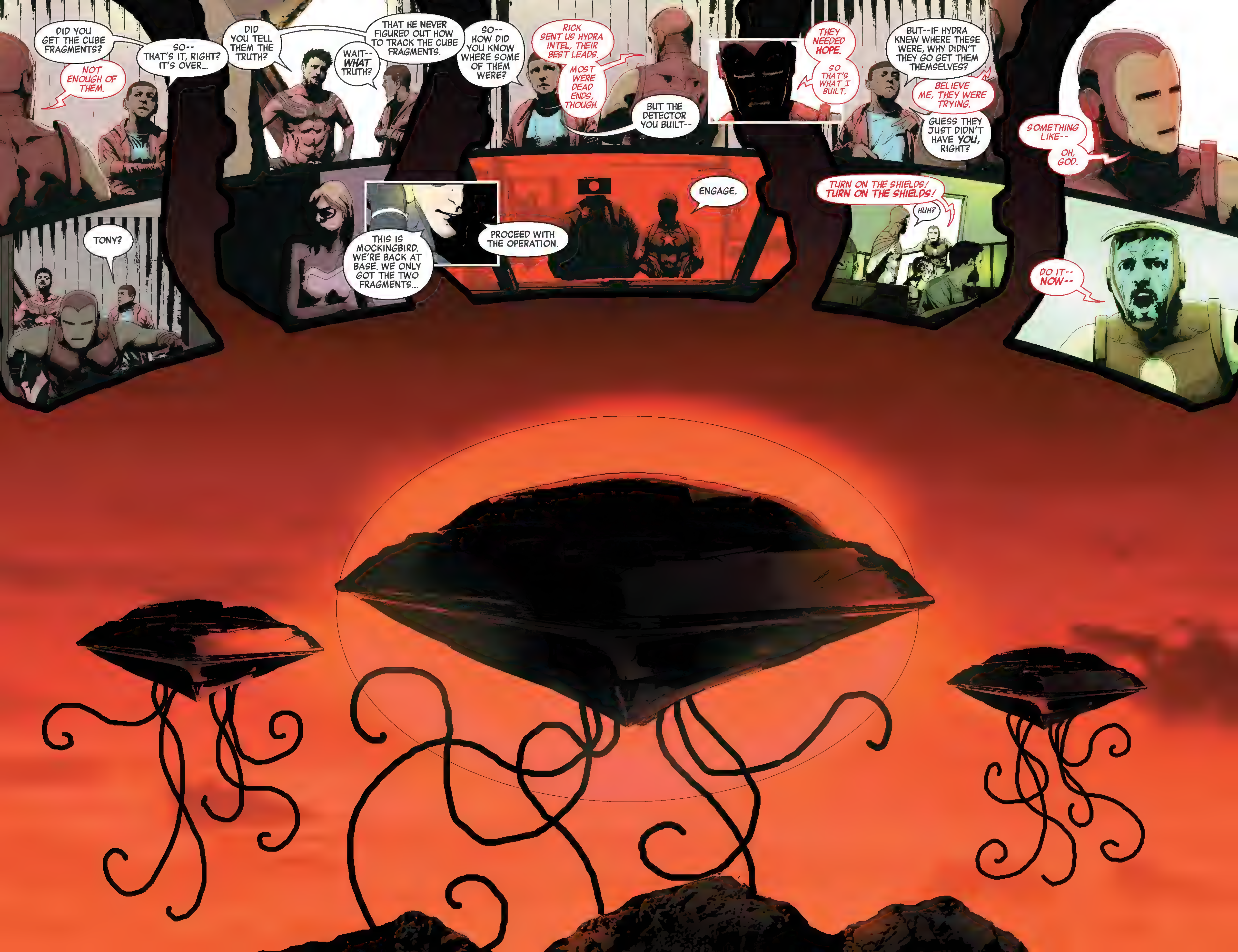

--IS SOMETHING TERRIBLE.
I'VE TRIED MANY ENCHANTMENTS. FAUSTUS HAS TRIED TO SUBVERT HIM. BUT EVEN WITHOUT THE HAMMER, HE IS STILL A *GOD.* HE IS *TOO STRONG.*
HE LISTENS TO *ME.* I'LL TALK TO HIM. BUT FOR NOW--
--I'M NEEDED ON DECK.
NO, STEVEN, WAIT--
IS EVERYTHING--
NO, IT'S JUST--THIS IS SOMETHING OF A *MOMENT,* ISN'T IT? TODAY YOU'RE MAKING A REAL STEP TOWARD ENDING ALL THIS--AFTER ALL THIS TIME. I JUST KEEP THINKING BACK TO THAT LITTLE BOY I FOUND IN THE SLUMS, AND WELL, I--
--I JUST WANTED TO TELL YOU HOW *PROUD* I AM OF YOU, MY DEAR BOY. AND THAT--I KNOW I COULD NEVER REPLACE YOUR MOTHER--
ELISA...
NO, LET ME FINISH, STEVEN. I KNOW I COULD NEVER REPLACE YOUR MOTHER--
--BUT YOU HAVE ALWAYS BEEN A *SON* TO ME.
NOW GO.
"RECLAIM WHAT WAS STOLEN...
"...RESTORE WHAT WAS LOST..."

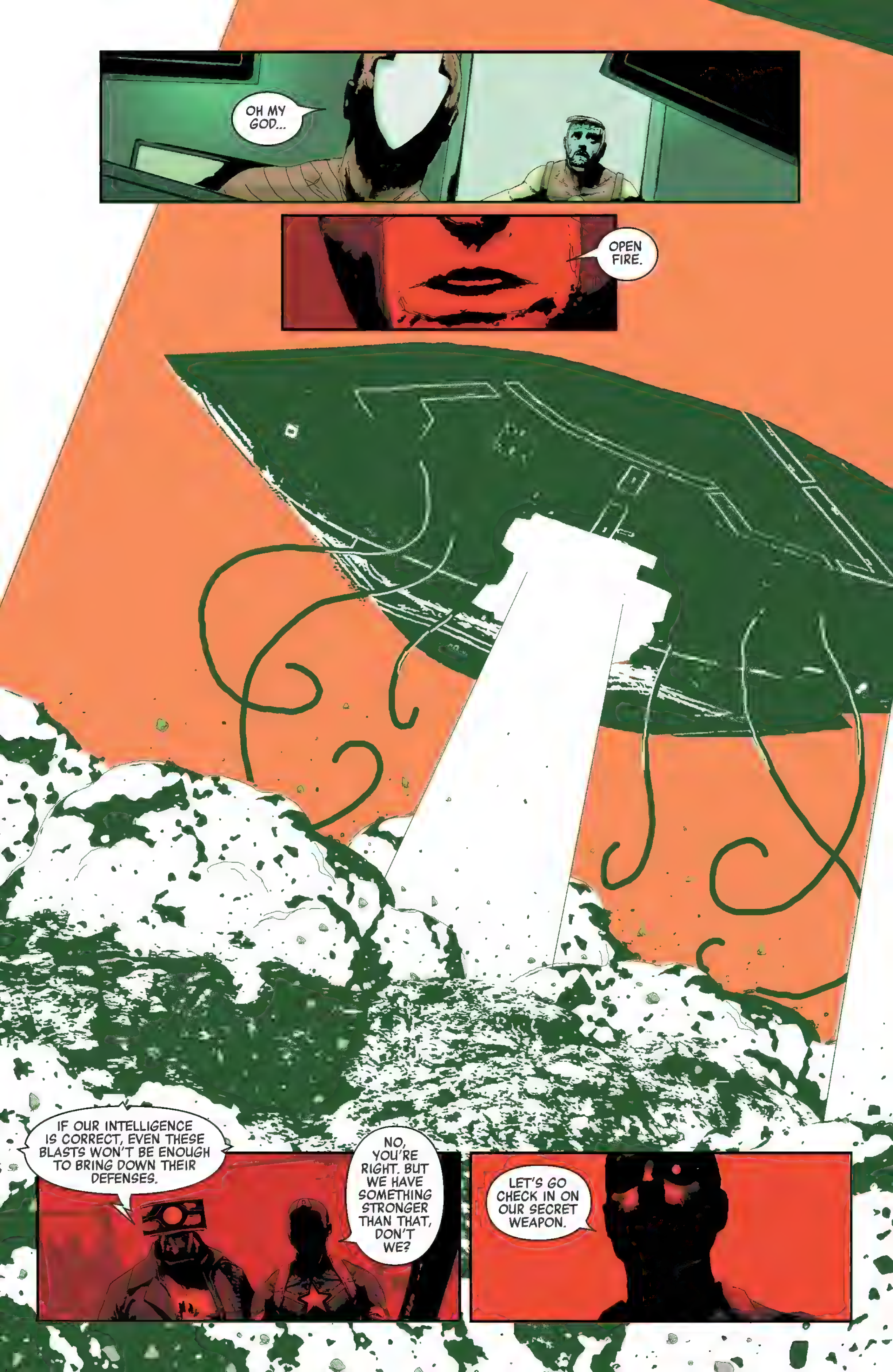

So yeah-- we lost.
The whole way back, we barely said a word to each other...
...but everyone knew this was the end.
You try to do what you can, Cassie. But sometimes you come up short.
THE MOUNT.
What matters is that, at some point, you try again.
We've all been through so much. Made some big sacrifices and took some heavy hits.
And I gotta admit, after all that, it really did feel good--

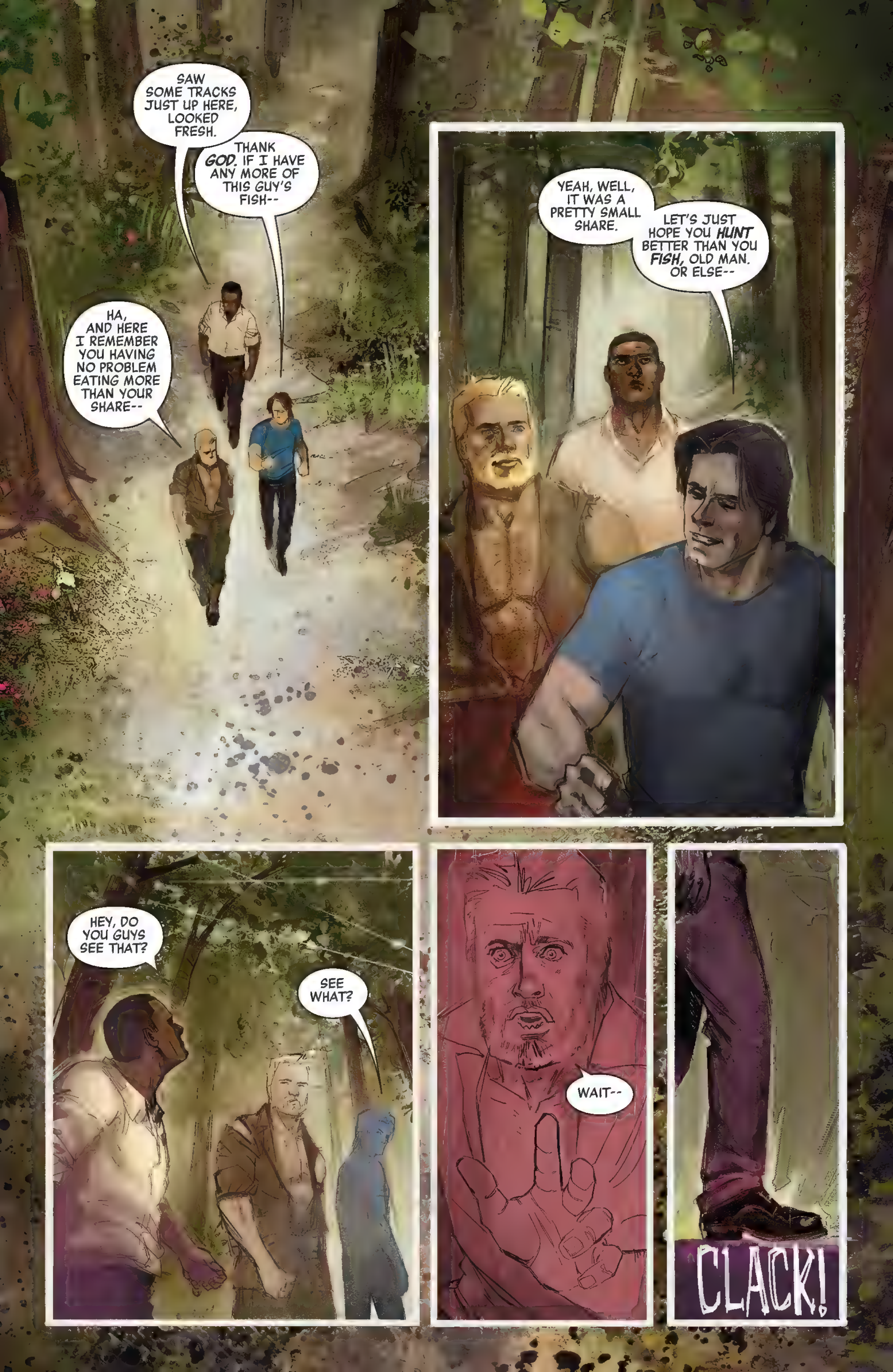

--to come home.
To see some familiar faces…
…to be reunited with those we love.
Yeah, it's good to be back…
…well, mostly.

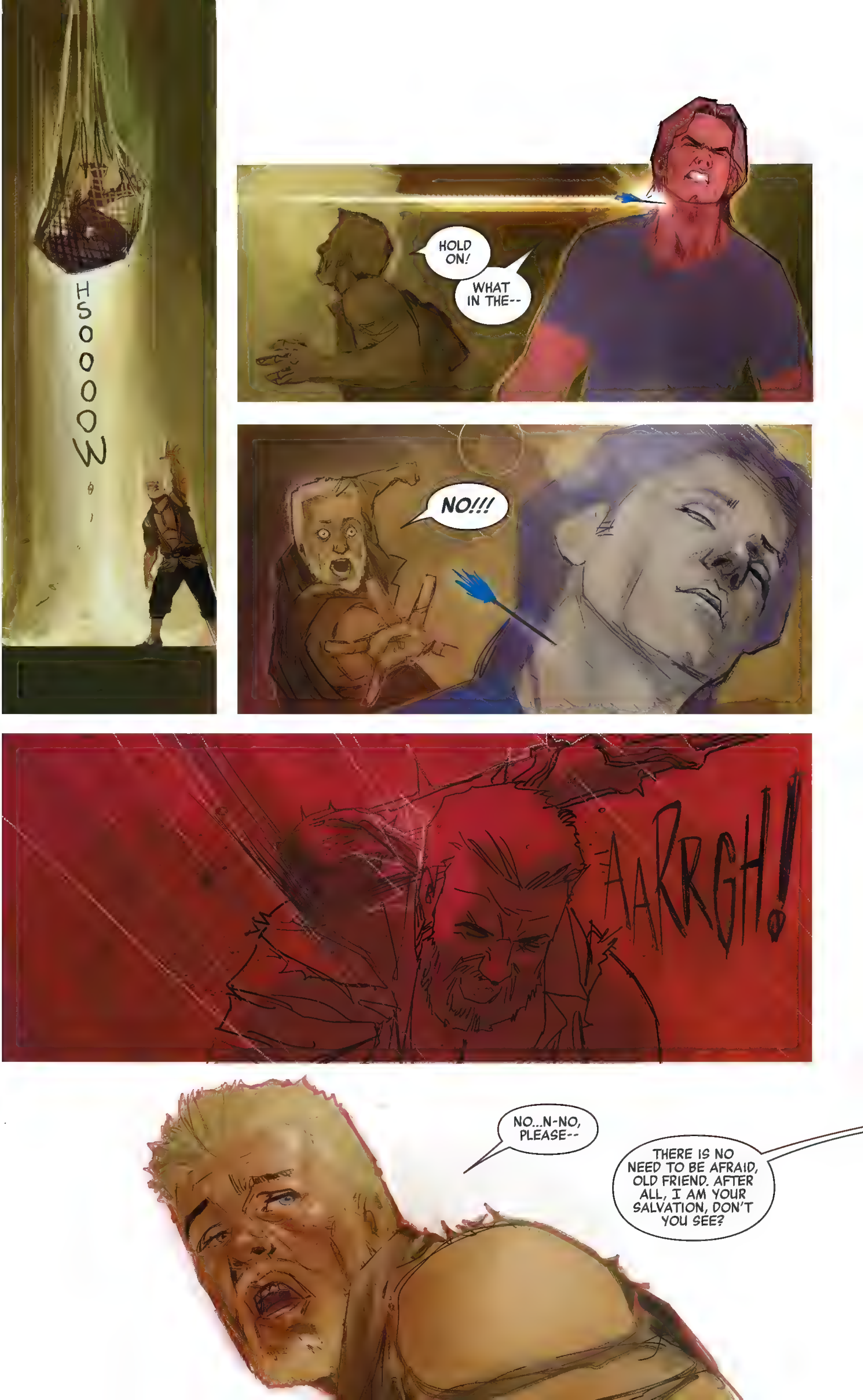

TWO?! **TWO?!** I THOUGHT YOU SAID THERE WERE **EIGHT OR NINE** OF THESE THINGS?
YEAH, THAT'S WHY WE CALL THE MISSION **UNSUCCESSFUL.**
BUT HEY, IT'S NOT ALL BAD. NOW THAT WE HAVE A COUPLE, WE CAN RUN SOME--
HE DOESN'T **NEED** THE GLASS-HALF-FULL SPEECH, SCOTT...
MAYBE I DON'T--BUT THE FOLKS HERE...**THEY** SURE AS HELL DID. SINCE VEGAS, THESE PEOPLE HAVE BEEN WALKING AROUND LIKE **ZOMBIES--**
"--THIS WAS THE ONLY HOPE THEY HAD."
AND THEY JUST LOST IT.
YEAH, WELL, THEY'RE NOT THE **ONLY** ONES WHO LOST SOMETHING. I'M GONNA GO CHECK ON HERC.
SOMEONE SHOULD TALK TO TONY--
"--HE'S NOT DOING SO GREAT, EITHER."
SHAUN, HAND ME THAT THING.
*UHH,* RAZ, WHICH-- TONY!]

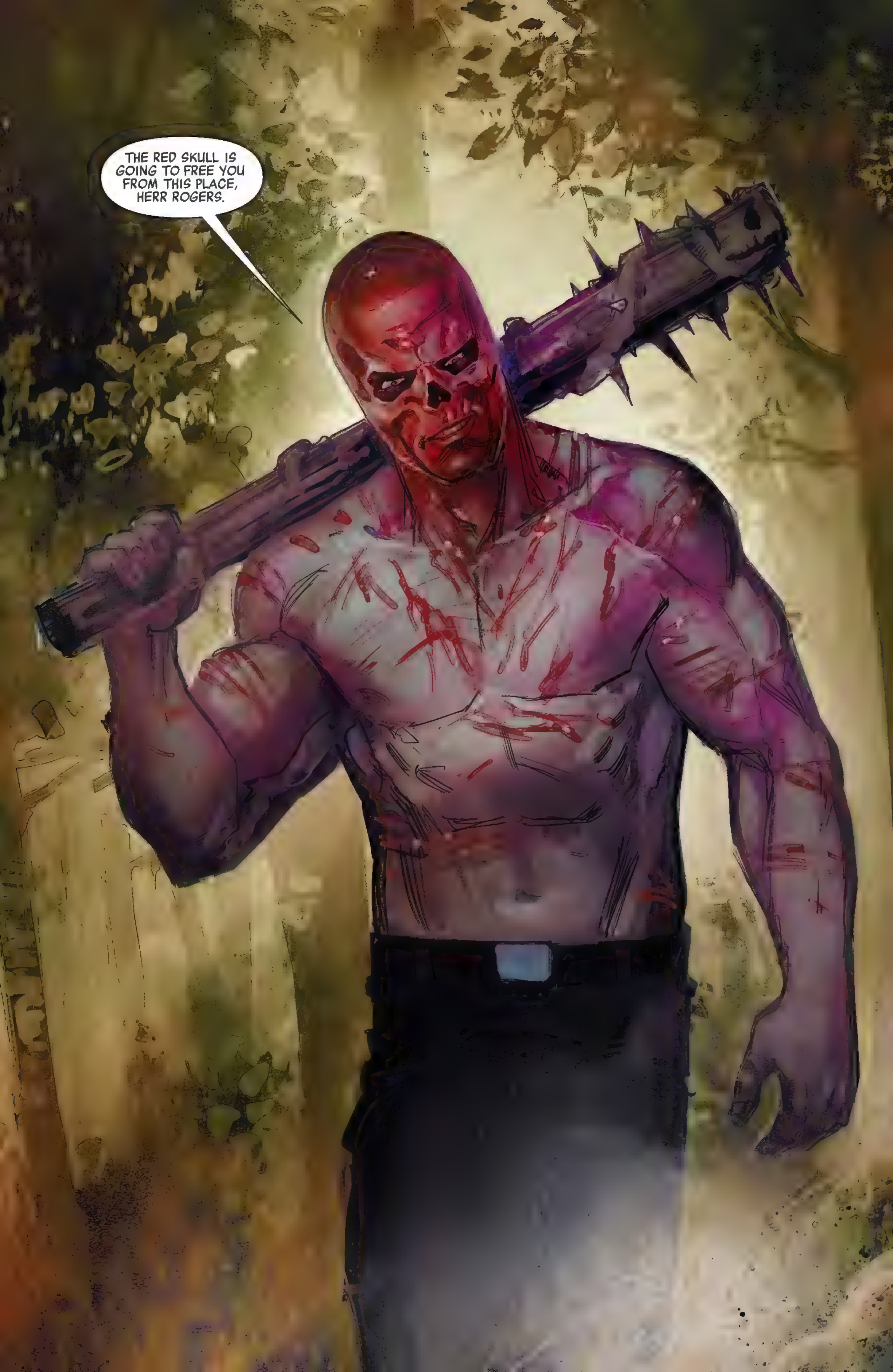

TONY-- YOU--YOU'RE *BACK!*
I AM. AND YOU HAVE MESSED UP ALL MY PILES.
SORRY--WE NEEDED THE ROOM FOR RAZ'S PROJECT.
PROJECT?
YOU ARE GONNA LOVE THIS--IT'S A *TIME CAPSULE.*
LIKE THE THINGS YOU PUT BEANIE BABIES IN?
KINDA. SEE, I WAS TRYING TO FIGURE OUT A WAY TO GET A MESSAGE OUT PAST THE DEFENSE SHIELD, OR INTO THE DARKFORCE. THEORETICALLY THIS *COULD* WORK.
IT'S ADAMANTIUM ALLOY, VIRTUALLY INDESTRUCTIBLE. AND ONCE WE'VE RECORDED A MESSAGE, IT BURROWS DEEP DOWN INTO THE GROUND. AND IT WAITS--I SET IT FOR A LITTLE OVER A HUNDRED YEARS. FIGURE HYDRA'S REIGN HAS GOTTA BE OVER BY *THEN,* RIGHT?
YOU'RE QUITE THE OPTIMIST.
ANYWAY, AT THAT POINT, IT SHOULD BE ABLE TO OPEN PORTALS, RIGHT? SEEING AS THERE'S NO SHIELD. AND SO I'M PROGRAMMING IT TO SEND MESSAGES BACK THROUGH TIME, TO SOME PRE-SET COORDINATES--
OUTSIDE THE SHIELD AND INSIDE THE DARK. BEFORE THEY GO UP. THAT'S GOOD, RAZ. BUT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT SENDING SOMETHING--EVEN IF IT'S JUST INFORMATION--BACK THROUGH THE TIMESTREAM.
NO OFFENSE, BUT THAT'S **REED RICHARDS** STUFF. NOT REALLY YOUR DEPARTMENT.
NO, YOU'RE RIGHT, IT ISN'T-- SO I CREATED AN A.I. THAT FIGURED IT ALL OUT FOR ME.
OKAY, YOU KNOW, I *JUST* HAD DINNER WITH ULTRON, AND YOU REALLY SHOULD BE CAREFUL WITH--
WHAT ABOUT *YOU?*

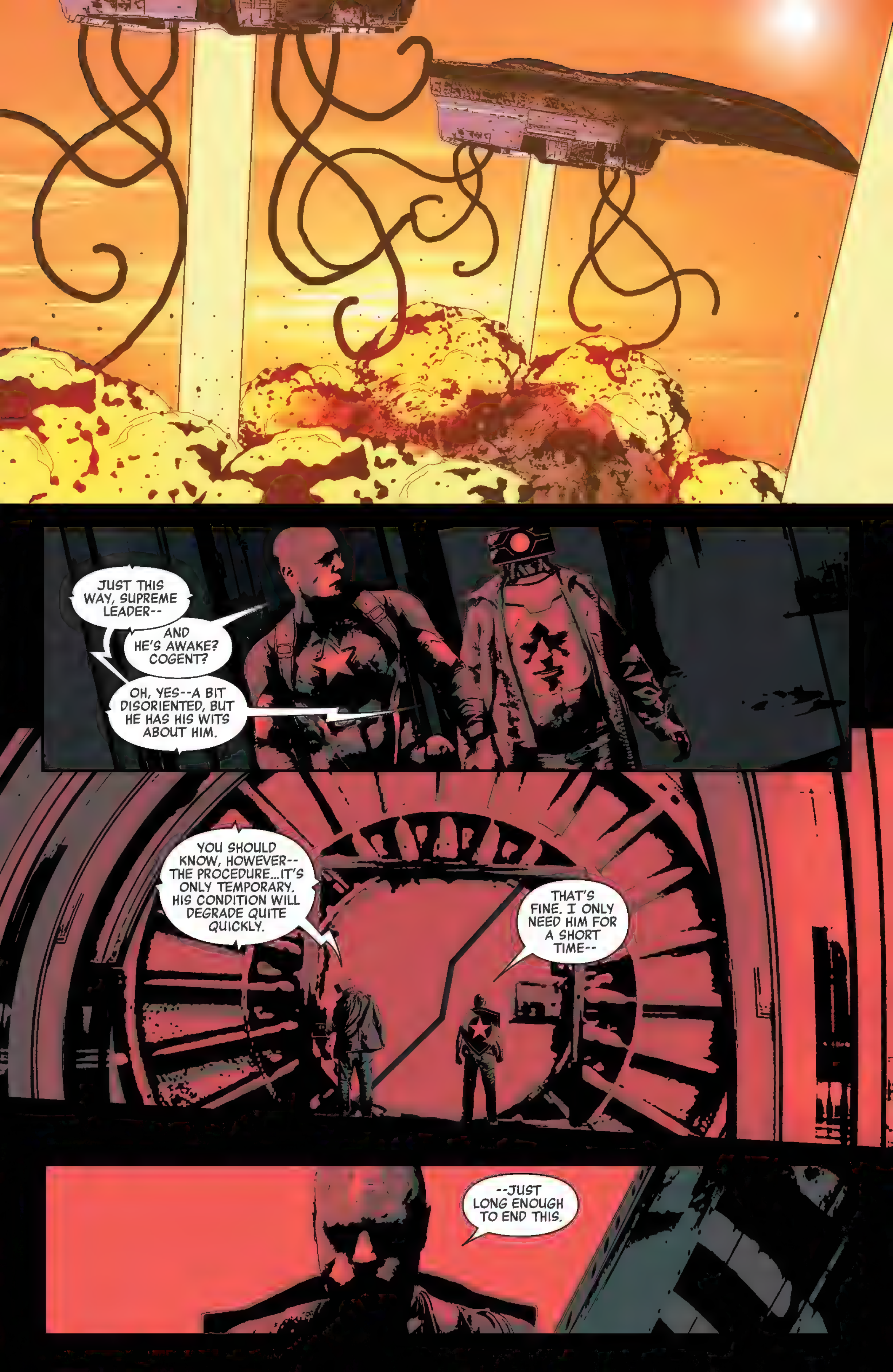

DID YOU GET THE CUBE FRAGMENTS?
NOT ENOUGH OF THEM.
SO-- THAT'S IT, RIGHT? IT'S OVER...
DID YOU TELL THEM THE TRUTH?
THAT HE NEVER FIGURED OUT HOW TO TRACK THE CUBE FRAGMENTS.
WAIT-- WHAT TRUTH?
SO-- HOW DID YOU KNOW WHERE SOME OF THEM WERE?
RICK SENT US HYDRA INTEL, THEIR BEST LEADS.
MOST WERE DEAD ENDS, THOUGH.
BUT THE DETECTOR YOU BUILT--
THEY NEEDED HOPE.
SO THAT'S WHAT I BUILT.
BUT--IF HYDRA KNEW WHERE THESE WERE, WHY DIDN'T THEY GO GET THEM THEMSELVES?
BELIEVE ME, THEY WERE TRYING.
GUESS THEY JUST DIDN'T HAVE YOU, RIGHT?
SOMETHING LIKE--
OH, GOD.
TONY?
THIS IS MOCKINGBIRD. WE'RE BACK AT BASE. WE ONLY GOT THE TWO FRAGMENTS...
PROCEED WITH THE OPERATION.
ENGAGE.
TURN ON THE SHIELDS! TURN ON THE SHIELDS!
HUH?
DO IT-- NOW--

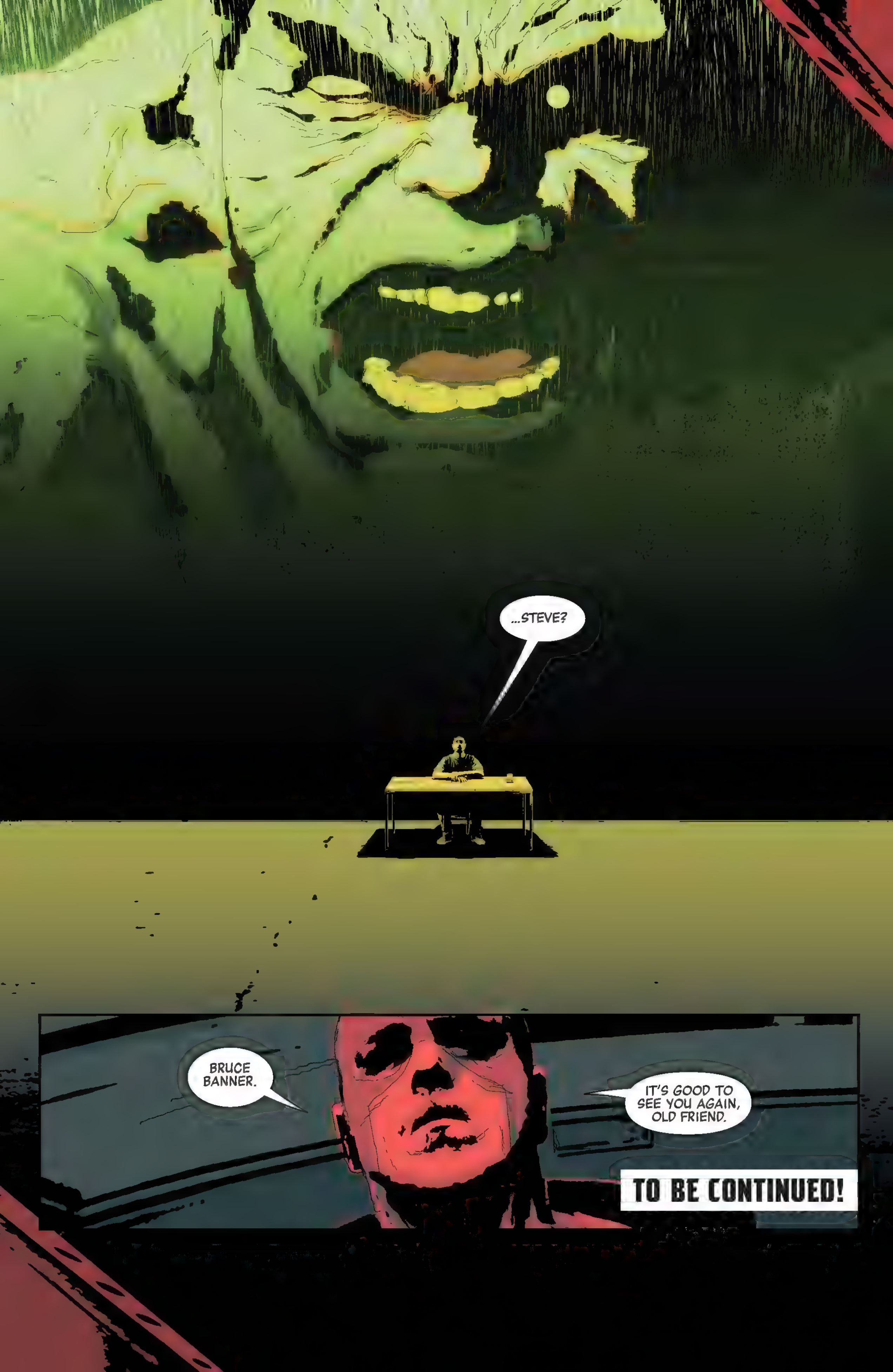

OH MY GOD...
OPEN FIRE.
IF OUR INTELLIGENCE IS CORRECT, EVEN THESE BLASTS WON'T BE ENOUGH TO BRING DOWN THEIR DEFENSES.
NO, YOU'RE RIGHT. BUT WE HAVE SOMETHING STRONGER THAN THAT, DON'T WE?
LET'S GO CHECK IN ON OUR SECRET WEAPON.


SAW SOME TRACKS JUST UP HERE, LOOKED FRESH.
THANK *GOD.* IF I HAVE ANY MORE OF THIS GUY'S FISH--
HA, AND HERE I REMEMBER YOU HAVING NO PROBLEM EATING MORE THAN YOUR SHARE--
YEAH, WELL, IT WAS A PRETTY SMALL SHARE.
LET'S JUST HOPE YOU *HUNT* BETTER THAN YOU *FISH,* OLD MAN. OR ELSE--
HEY, DO YOU GUYS SEE THAT?
SEE WHAT?
WAIT--
CLACK!


WOOOOSH
HOLD ON!
WHAT IN THE--
NO!!!
AARRGH!
NO...N-NO, PLEASE--
THERE IS NO NEED TO BE AFRAID, OLD FRIEND. AFTER ALL, I AM YOUR SALVATION, DON'T YOU SEE?


THE RED SKULL IS GOING TO FREE YOU FROM THIS PLACE, HERR ROGERS.

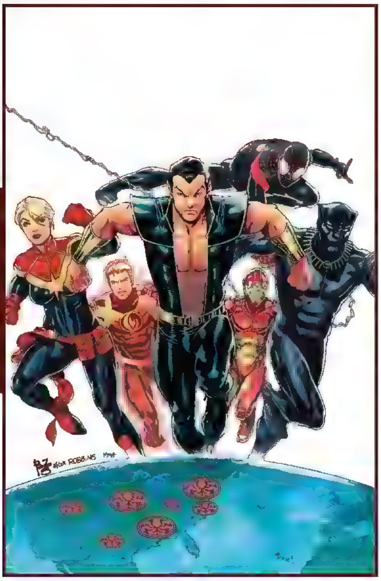

JUST THIS WAY, SUPREME LEADER--
AND HE'S AWAKE? COGENT?
OH, YES--A BIT DISORIENTED, BUT HE HAS HIS WITS ABOUT HIM.
YOU SHOULD KNOW, HOWEVER--THE PROCEDURE...IT'S ONLY TEMPORARY. HIS CONDITION WILL DEGRADE QUITE QUICKLY.
THAT'S FINE. I ONLY NEED HIM FOR A SHORT TIME--
--JUST LONG ENOUGH TO END THIS.


...STEVE?
BRUCE BANNER.
IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN, OLD FRIEND.
TO BE CONTINUED!

# Secret Empire

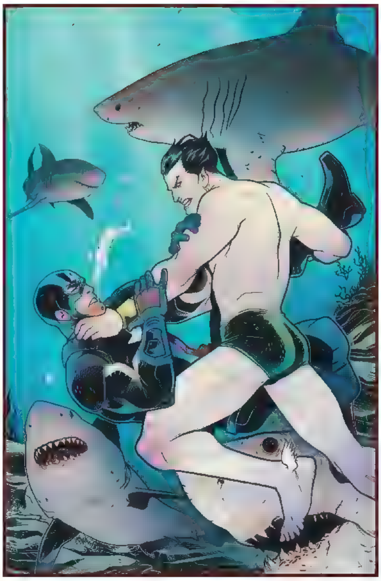
## June

### SECRET EMPIRE: BRAVE NEW WORLD #1 & #2



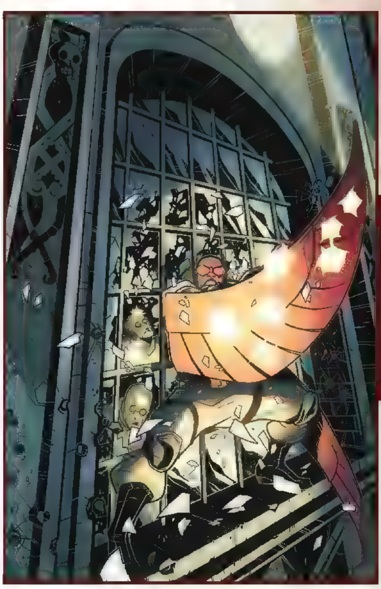
The Invaders return...and a new Patriot is born!

### CAPTAIN AMERICA: STEVE ROGERS #18



Will Namor and Black Panther kneel before Hydra?

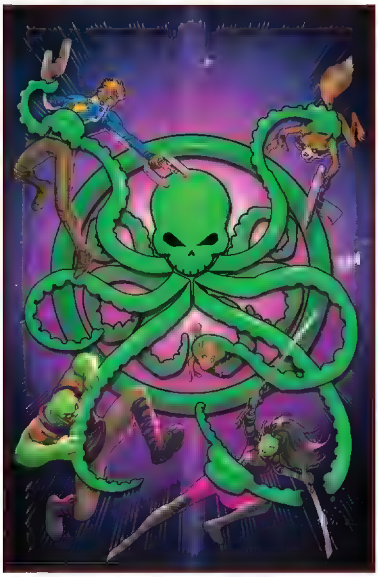
### CAPTAIN AMERICA: SAM WILSON #23



Sam leads Tony Stark's team on a daring escape from the U.S.!

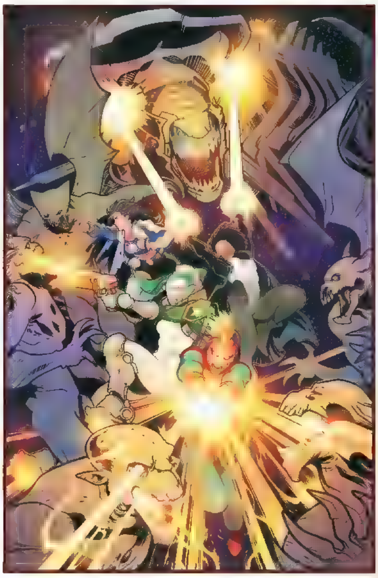
## Beyond the Shield

### GUARDIANS ANNUAL #1



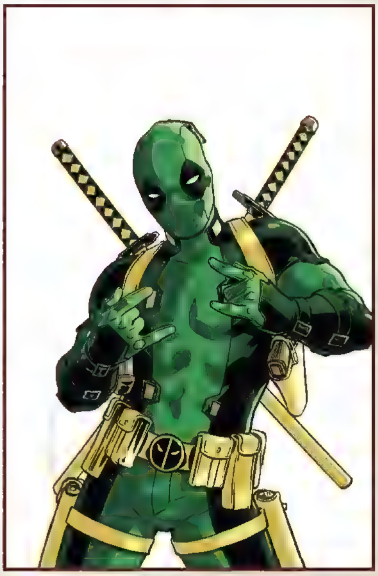
The Guardians search for a weapon that can turn the tide against the Chitauri!

### THE MIGHTY CAPTAIN MARVEL #6



The battle against the Chitauri rages on, but Captain Marvel's forces are running out of hope.

### DEADPOOL #32



Captain America wouldn't steer Deadpool wrong... right?

# SECRET EMPIRE

## JUNE

### SECRET WARRIORS #3

HOW FAR WILL MS. MARVEL GO TO PROTECT INHUMANS FROM HYDRA?

### U.S.AVENGERS #7

AVENGERS OF EUROPE, ASSEMBLE!

### OCCUPY AVENGERS #8

HAWKEYE'S CHAMPIONS OF THE PEOPLE MAKE ONE LAST STAND AGAINST HYDRA.

## DARKFORCE NEW YORK

### DOCTOR STRANGE #22

DOCTOR STRANGE FINDS AN UNLIKELY ALLY IN THE FIGHT AGAINST THE DARKFORCE: WILSON FISK.

### UNCANNY AVENGERS #24

TRICKED BY THEIR FORMER LEADER AND ISOLATED IN THE DARKFORCE, THE UNITY SQUAD FIGHTS TO SURVIVE.

### AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #29

SUPERIOR OCTOPUS IS BACK-- AND HE'S AFTER PARKER INDUSTRIES!

# SECRET EMPIRE

## NEXT

SECRET EMPIRE
#6

CAN THE UNDERGROUND SURVIVE A DIRECT ATTACK FROM HYDRA,
OR WILL A TRAITOR TAKE THEM DOWN FROM WITHIN?

### SECRET EMPIRE: UNDERGROUND #1

THE HEROES OF THE UNDERGROUND RACE CAPTAIN AMERICA TO A COSMIC CUBE FRAGMENT IN THE SAVAGE LAND!

### SECRET EMPIRE: UNITED #1

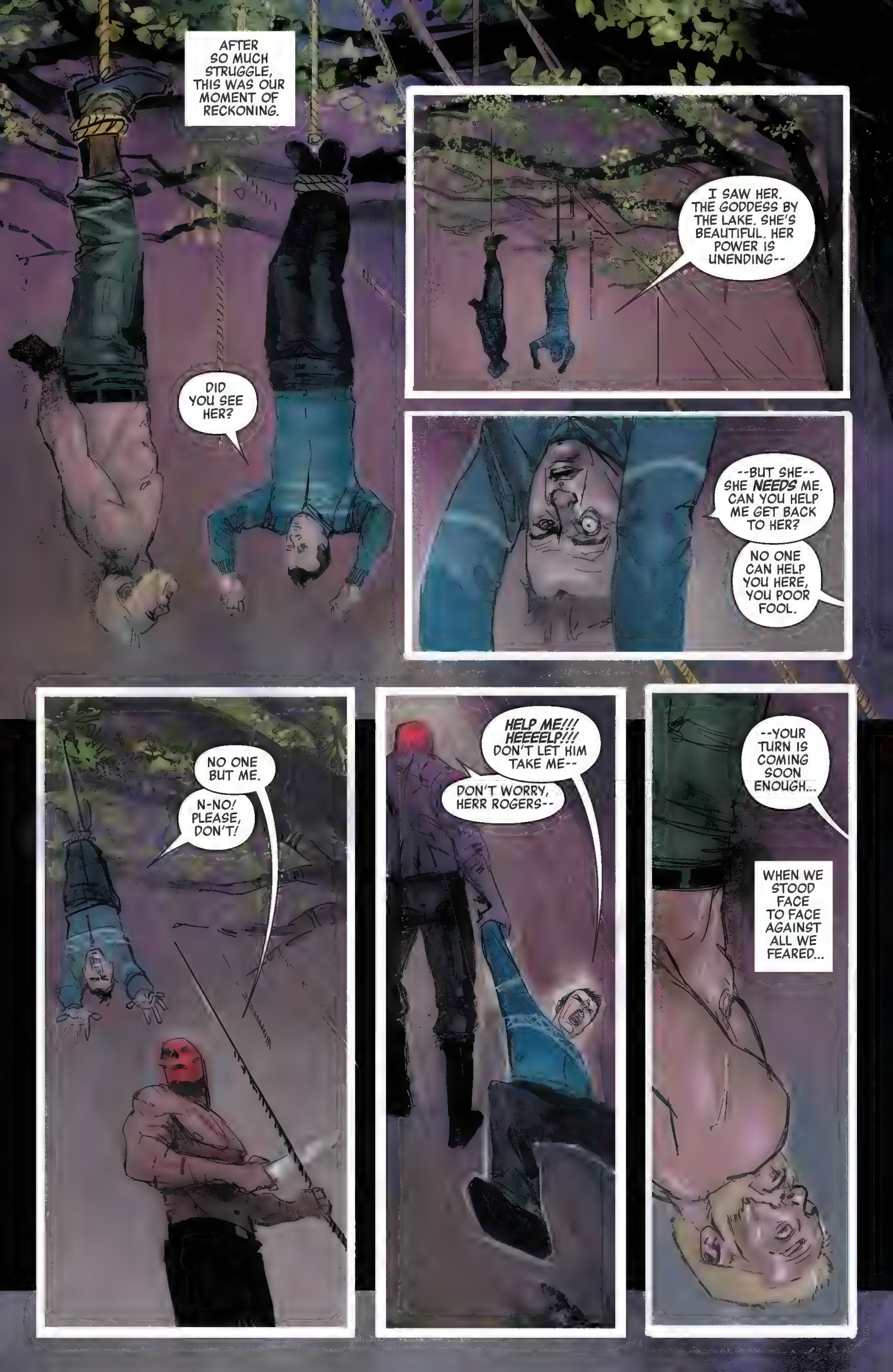
TENSIONS ARE RISING IN THE MUTANT HOMELAND OF NEW TIAN, AND STEVE ROGERS ISN'T HAPPY ABOUT IT.

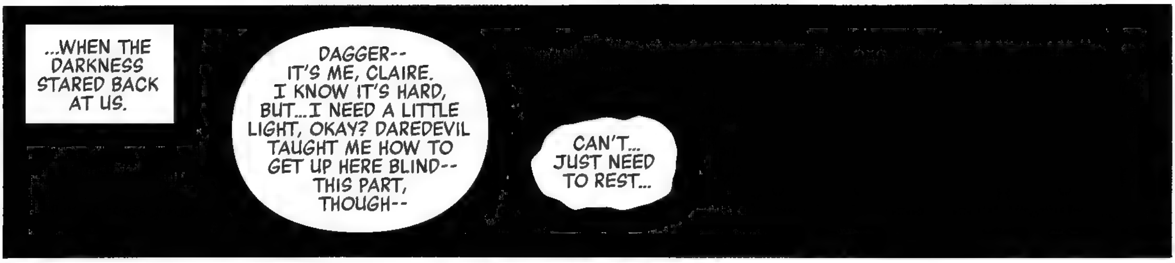
# SECRET EMPIRE™

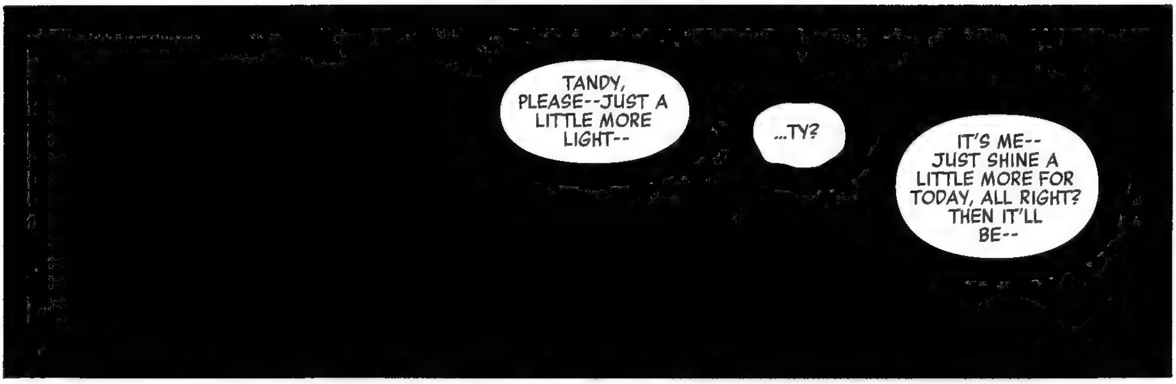
MARVEL

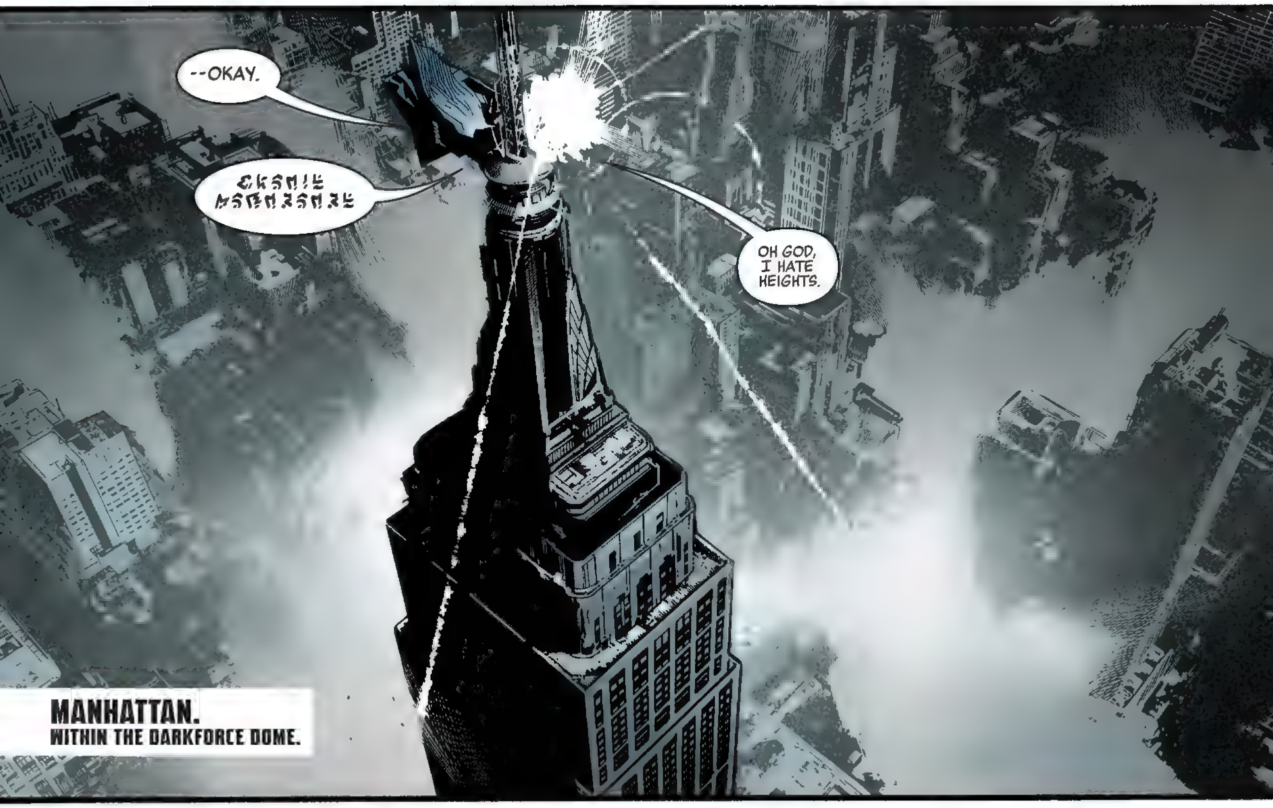
#6

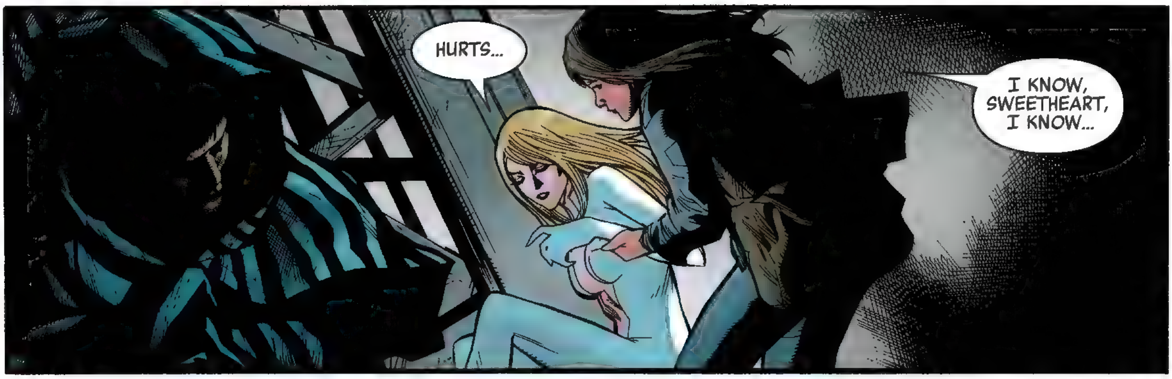
NICK SPENCER, LEINIL FRANCIS YU, ROD REIS, JOSHUA CASSARA

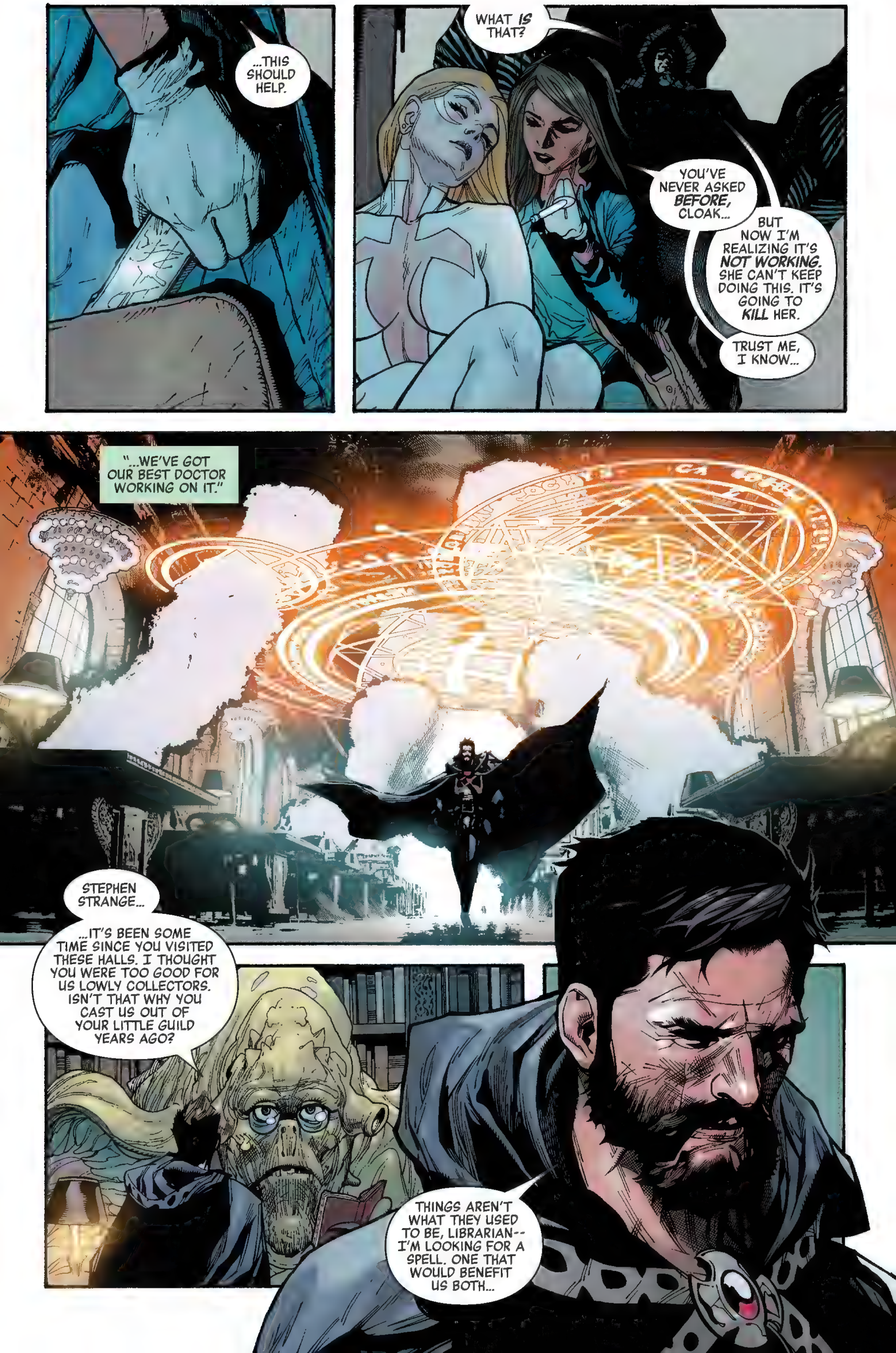

AFTER SO MUCH STRUGGLE, THIS WAS OUR MOMENT OF RECKONING.
DID YOU SEE HER?
I SAW HER. THE GODDESS BY THE LAKE. SHE'S BEAUTIFUL. HER POWER IS UNENDING--
--BUT SHE-- SHE NEEDS ME. CAN YOU HELP ME GET BACK TO HER?
NO ONE CAN HELP YOU HERE, YOU POOR FOOL.
NO ONE BUT ME.
N-NO! PLEASE, DON'T!
HELP ME!!! HEEEELP!!! DON'T LET HIM TAKE ME--
DON'T WORRY, HERR ROGERS--
--YOUR TURN IS COMING SOON ENOUGH...
WHEN WE STOOD FACE TO FACE AGAINST ALL WE FEARED...

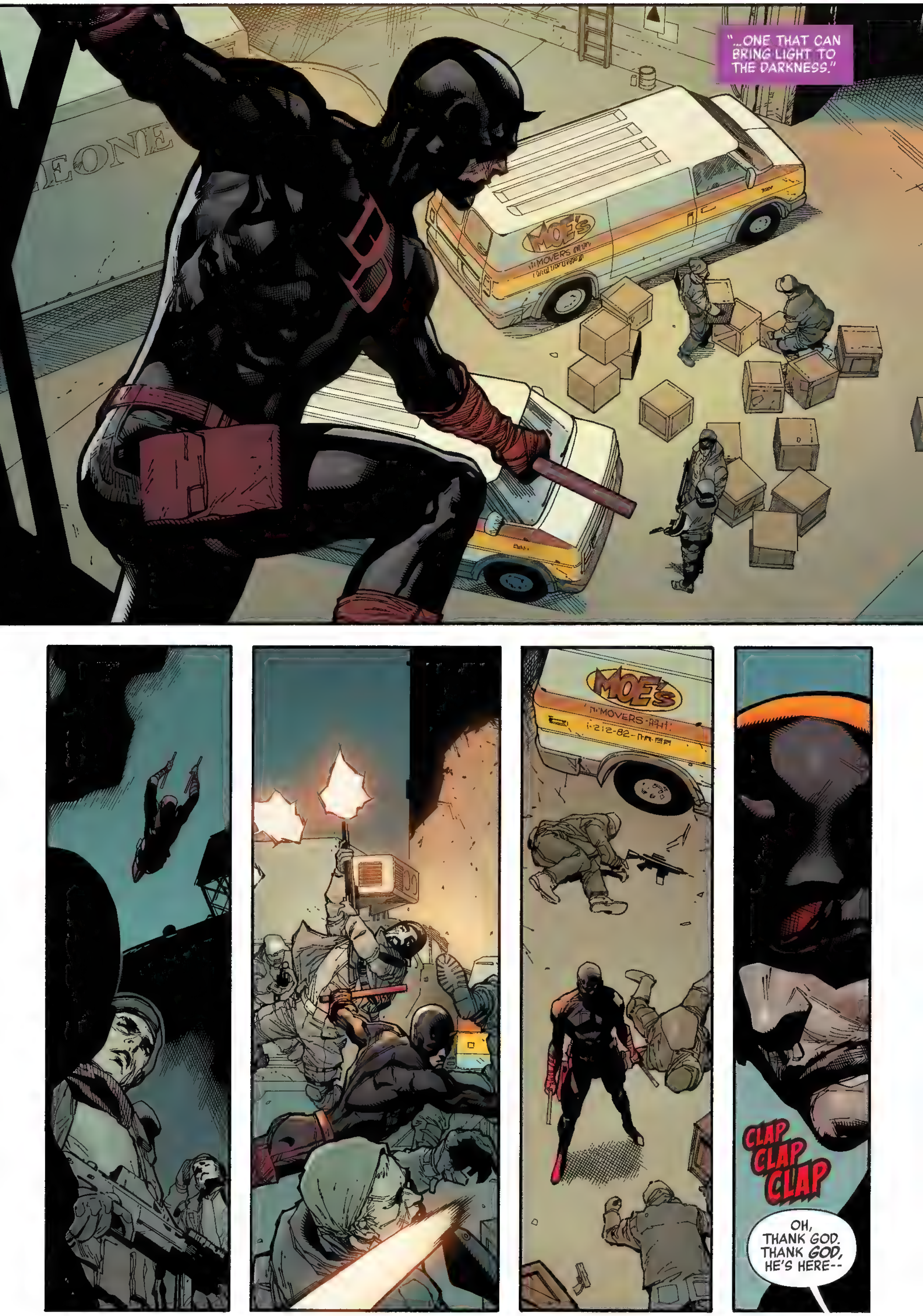

...WHEN THE DARKNESS STARED BACK AT US.
DAGGER-- IT'S ME, CLAIRE. I KNOW IT'S HARD, BUT...I NEED A LITTLE LIGHT, OKAY? DAREDEVIL TAUGHT ME HOW TO GET UP HERE BLIND-- THIS PART, THOUGH--
CAN'T... JUST NEED TO REST...

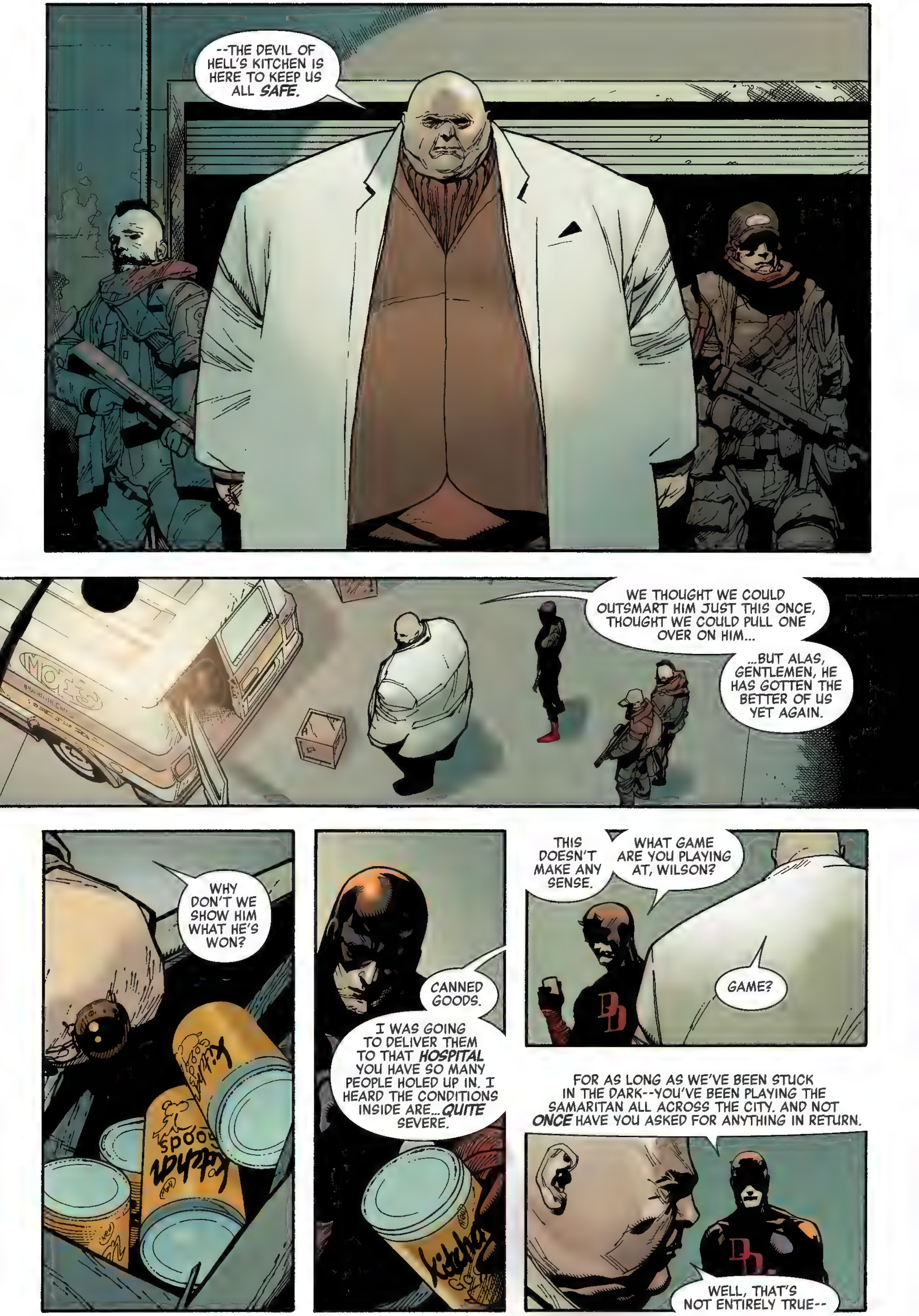

TANDY, PLEASE--JUST A LITTLE MORE LIGHT--
...TY?
IT'S ME-- JUST SHINE A LITTLE MORE FOR TODAY, ALL RIGHT? THEN IT'LL BE--

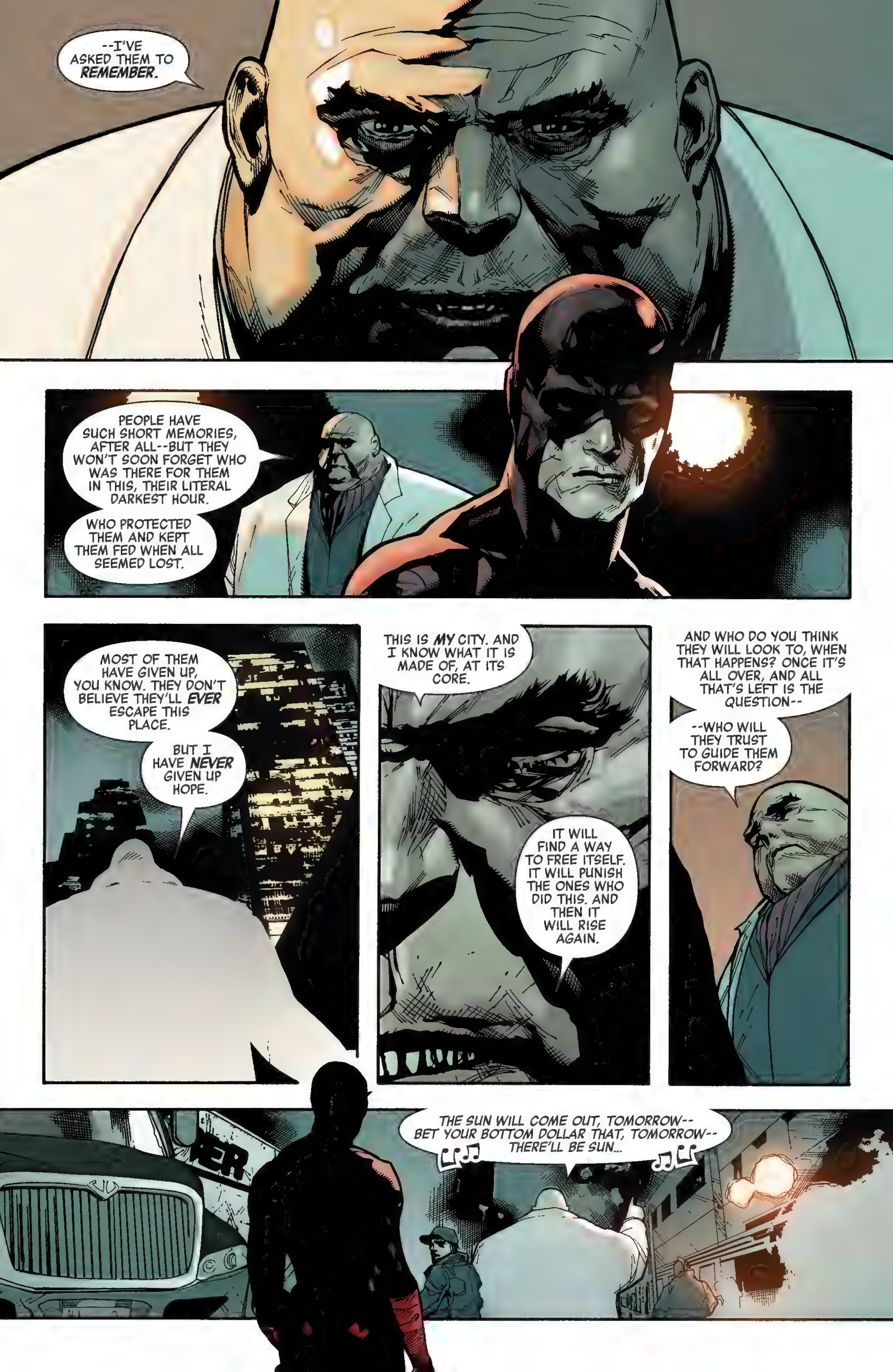

--OKAY.
OH GOD, I HATE HEIGHTS.
MANHATTAN.
WITHIN THE DARKFORCE DOME.

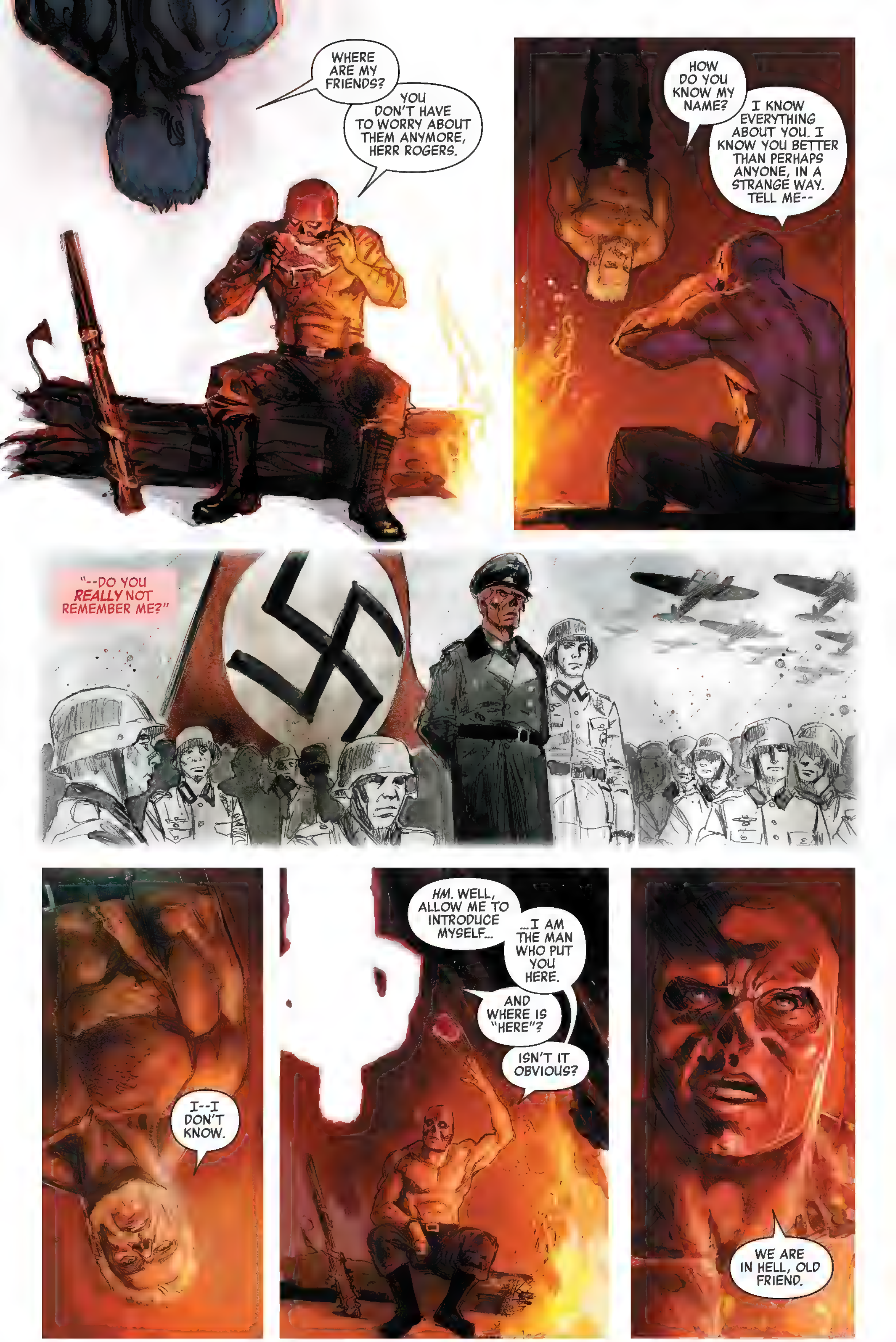

HURTS...
I KNOW, SWEETHEART, I KNOW...

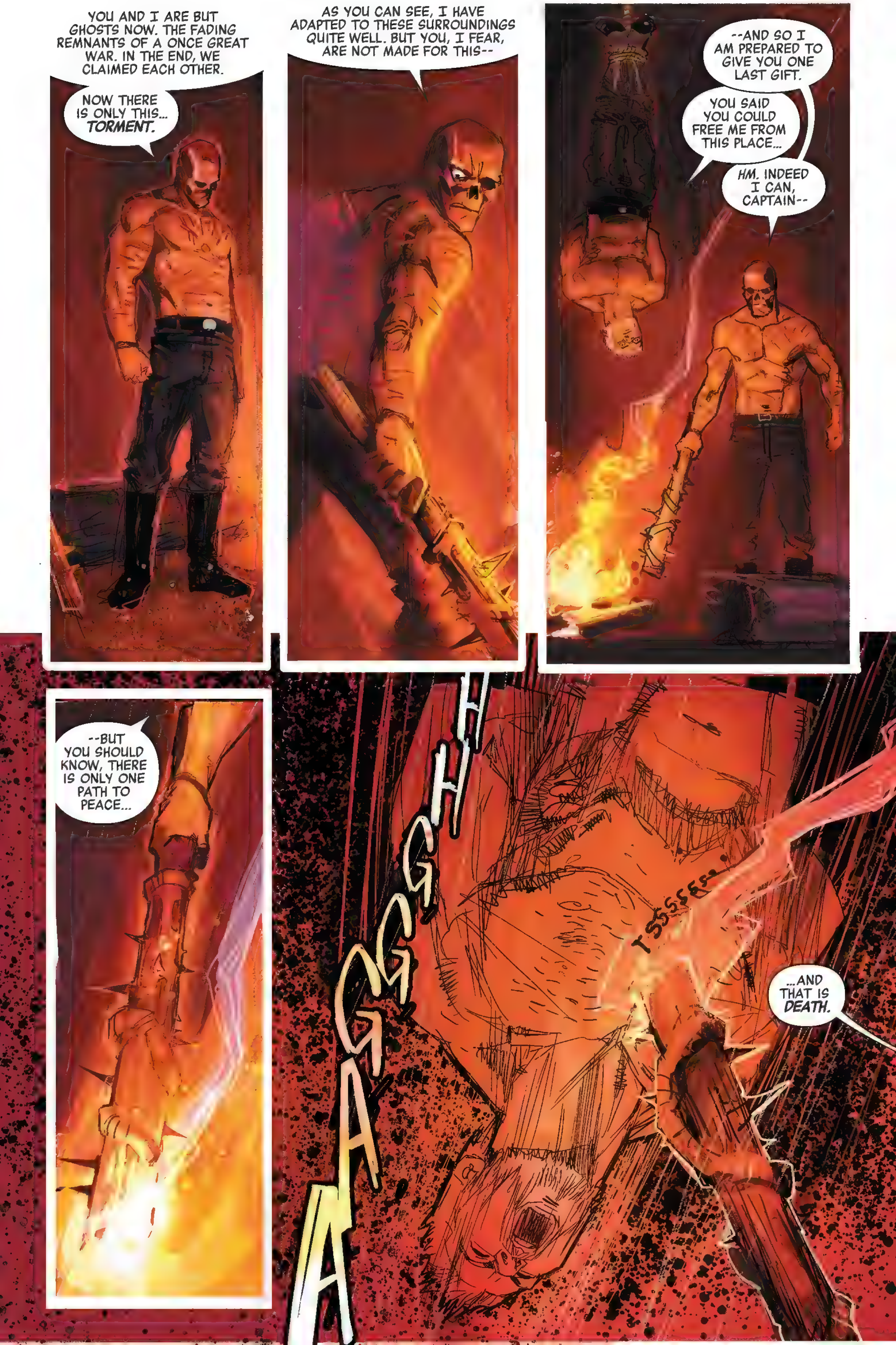

...THIS SHOULD HELP.
WHAT *IS* THAT?
YOU'VE NEVER ASKED *BEFORE,* CLOAK...
BUT NOW I'M REALIZING IT'S *NOT WORKING.* SHE CAN'T KEEP DOING THIS. IT'S GOING TO *KILL* HER.
TRUST ME, I KNOW...
"...WE'VE GOT OUR BEST DOCTOR WORKING ON IT."
STEPHEN STRANGE...
...IT'S BEEN SOME TIME SINCE YOU VISITED THESE HALLS. I THOUGHT YOU WERE TOO GOOD FOR US LOWLY COLLECTORS. ISN'T THAT WHY YOU CAST US OUT OF YOUR LITTLE GUILD YEARS AGO?
THINGS AREN'T WHAT THEY USED TO BE, LIBRARIAN-- I'M LOOKING FOR A SPELL. ONE THAT WOULD BENEFIT US BOTH...


"...ONE THAT CAN BRING LIGHT TO THE DARKNESS."
LEONE
MOE'S
MOVERS
MOE'S
MOVERS
1-212-82-
CLAP CLAP CLAP
OH, THANK GOD. THANK *GOD*, HE'S HERE--


--THE DEVIL OF HELL'S KITCHEN IS HERE TO KEEP US ALL *SAFE.*
WE THOUGHT WE COULD OUTSMART HIM JUST THIS ONCE, THOUGHT WE COULD PULL ONE OVER ON HIM...
...BUT ALAS, GENTLEMEN, HE HAS GOTTEN THE BETTER OF US YET AGAIN.
MOE'S
WHY DON'T WE SHOW HIM WHAT HE'S WON?
Kitchen Goods
CANNED GOODS.
I WAS GOING TO DELIVER THEM TO THAT *HOSPITAL* YOU HAVE SO MANY PEOPLE HOLED UP IN. I HEARD THE CONDITIONS INSIDE ARE...*QUITE* SEVERE.
THIS DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE.
WHAT GAME ARE YOU PLAYING AT, WILSON?
GAME?
FOR AS LONG AS WE'VE BEEN STUCK IN THE DARK--YOU'VE BEEN PLAYING THE SAMARITAN ALL ACROSS THE CITY. AND NOT *ONCE* HAVE YOU ASKED FOR ANYTHING IN RETURN.
WELL, THAT'S NOT ENTIRELY TRUE--


--I'VE ASKED THEM TO *REMEMBER*.
PEOPLE HAVE SUCH SHORT MEMORIES, AFTER ALL--BUT THEY WON'T SOON FORGET WHO WAS THERE FOR THEM IN THIS, THEIR LITERAL DARKEST HOUR.
WHO PROTECTED THEM AND KEPT THEM FED WHEN ALL SEEMED LOST.
MOST OF THEM HAVE GIVEN UP, YOU KNOW. THEY DON'T BELIEVE THEY'LL *EVER* ESCAPE THIS PLACE.
BUT I HAVE *NEVER* GIVEN UP HOPE.
THIS IS *MY* CITY. AND I KNOW WHAT IT IS MADE OF, AT ITS CORE.
IT WILL FIND A WAY TO FREE ITSELF. IT WILL PUNISH THE ONES WHO DID THIS. AND THEN IT WILL RISE AGAIN.
AND WHO DO YOU THINK THEY WILL LOOK TO, WHEN THAT HAPPENS? ONCE IT'S ALL OVER, AND ALL THAT'S LEFT IS THE QUESTION--
--WHO WILL THEY TRUST TO GUIDE THEM FORWARD?
♫ *THE SUN WILL COME OUT, TOMORROW-- BET YOUR BOTTOM DOLLAR THAT, TOMORROW-- THERE'LL BE SUN...* ♫


WHERE ARE MY FRIENDS?
YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT THEM ANYMORE, HERR ROGERS.
HOW DO YOU KNOW MY NAME?
I KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU. I KNOW YOU BETTER THAN PERHAPS ANYONE, IN A STRANGE WAY. TELL ME--
"--DO YOU *REALLY* NOT REMEMBER ME?"
I--I DON'T KNOW.
*HM.* WELL, ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE MYSELF...
...I AM THE MAN WHO PUT YOU HERE.
AND WHERE IS "HERE"?
ISN'T IT OBVIOUS?
WE ARE IN HELL, OLD FRIEND.


YOU AND I ARE BUT GHOSTS NOW. THE FADING REMNANTS OF A ONCE GREAT WAR. IN THE END, WE CLAIMED EACH OTHER.
NOW THERE IS ONLY THIS... *TORMENT.*
AS YOU CAN SEE, I HAVE ADAPTED TO THESE SURROUNDINGS QUITE WELL. BUT YOU, I FEAR, ARE NOT MADE FOR THIS--
--AND SO I AM PREPARED TO GIVE YOU ONE LAST GIFT.
YOU SAID YOU COULD FREE ME FROM THIS PLACE...
HM. INDEED I CAN, CAPTAIN--
--BUT YOU SHOULD KNOW, THERE IS ONLY ONE PATH TO PEACE...
AAGGGHH
TSSSSS
...AND THAT IS *DEATH.*

# SECRET EMPIRE

Steve Rogers, A.K.A. Captain America, has claimed the United States for Hydra. With most of Earth's heroes trapped in the Darkforce bubble surrounding Manhattan or stranded behind the Planetary Defense Shield, his power seems absolute.

Black Widow believes that the only way to stop Captain America is to kill him, but the other members of the Underground believe that the shattered Cosmic Cube holds the key to Rogers' sudden transformation, and it might be able to save him, if they can put the pieces back together. Steve is after the cube as well, hoping to use it to rewrite the world in Hydra's image.

Tony Stark's team was able to gather two shards and bring them back to the Mount, but someone in the Underground was waiting to tip Steve off to their return. Now, the Hydra Supreme has come to collect what's his, and he's got a trump card up his sleeve: Bruce Banner, temporarily resurrected after being killed by Hawkeye during the second super hero civil war.

**Writer** ▪ Nick Spencer **Penciler** ▪ Leinil Francis Yu
**Inkers** ▪ Gerry Alanguilan with Leinil Francis Yu
**Color Artists** ▪ Sunny Gho with Java Tartaglia
**Additional Art** ▪ Rod Reis; Joshua Cassara & Rachelle Rosenberg
**Letterer** ▪ VC's Travis Lanham
**Recap Page Art** ▪ Andrea Sorrentino
**Cover** ▪ Mark Brooks
**Variant Covers** ▪ John Tyler Christopher; Dan Mora & Edgar Delgado; Andrea Sorrentino; Leinil Francis Yu & Romulo Fajardo Jr.

**Production Design** ▪ Carlos Lao **Assistant Editor** ▪ Alanna Smith
**Editor** ▪ Tom Brevoort **Editor in Chief** ▪ Axel Alonso
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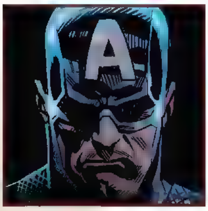
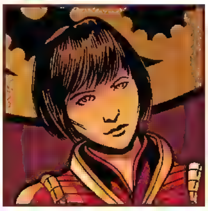
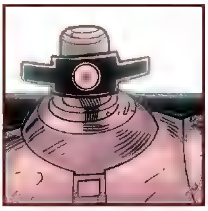
# HYDRA

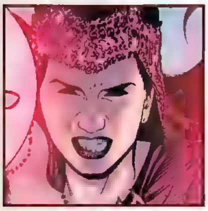
Hydra Command

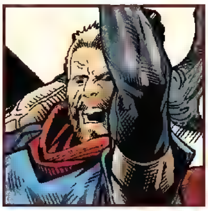

Captain America

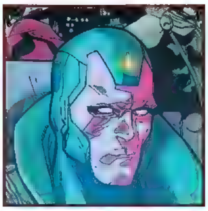

Madame Hydra


Arnim Zola

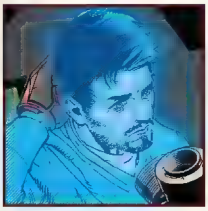
Avengers

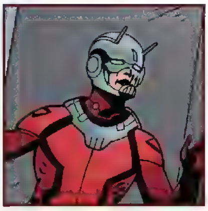

Scarlet Witch

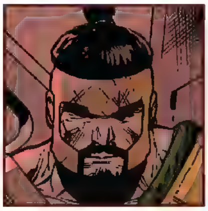

Odinson

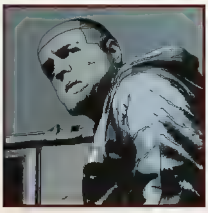

Vision

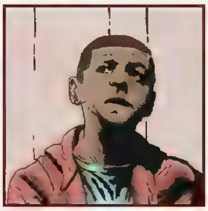
# THE UNDERGROUND

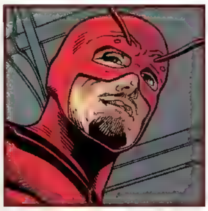

Tony Stark (A.I.)

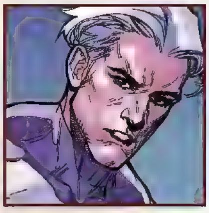

Ant-Man


Hercules


Sam Wilson


Rayshaun Lucas


Giant-Man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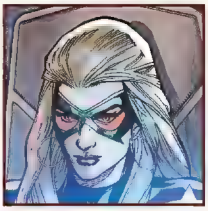
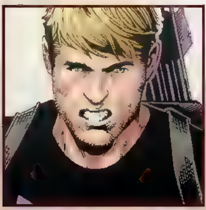
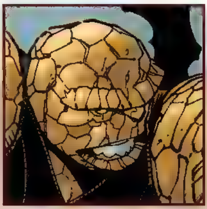
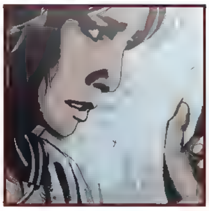
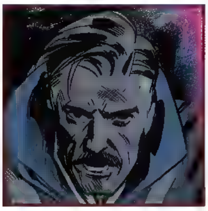

Mockingbird

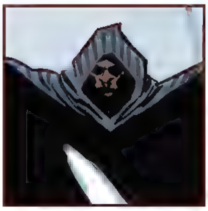

Hawkeye


The Thing

# DARKFORCE NEW YORK


Claire Temple


Doctor Strange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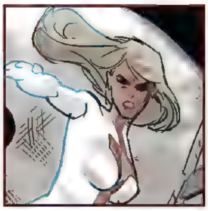
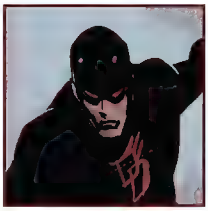
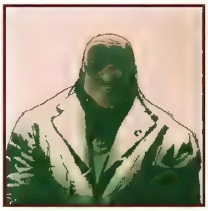
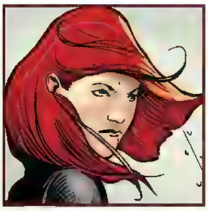
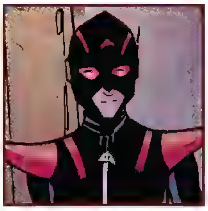

Dagger

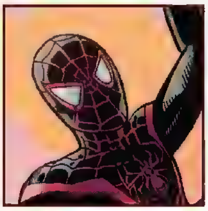

Daredevil

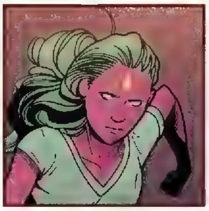

Kingpin

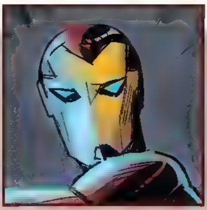
# THE RED ROOM

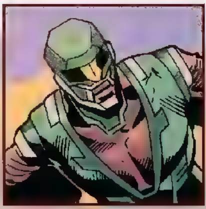

Black Widow

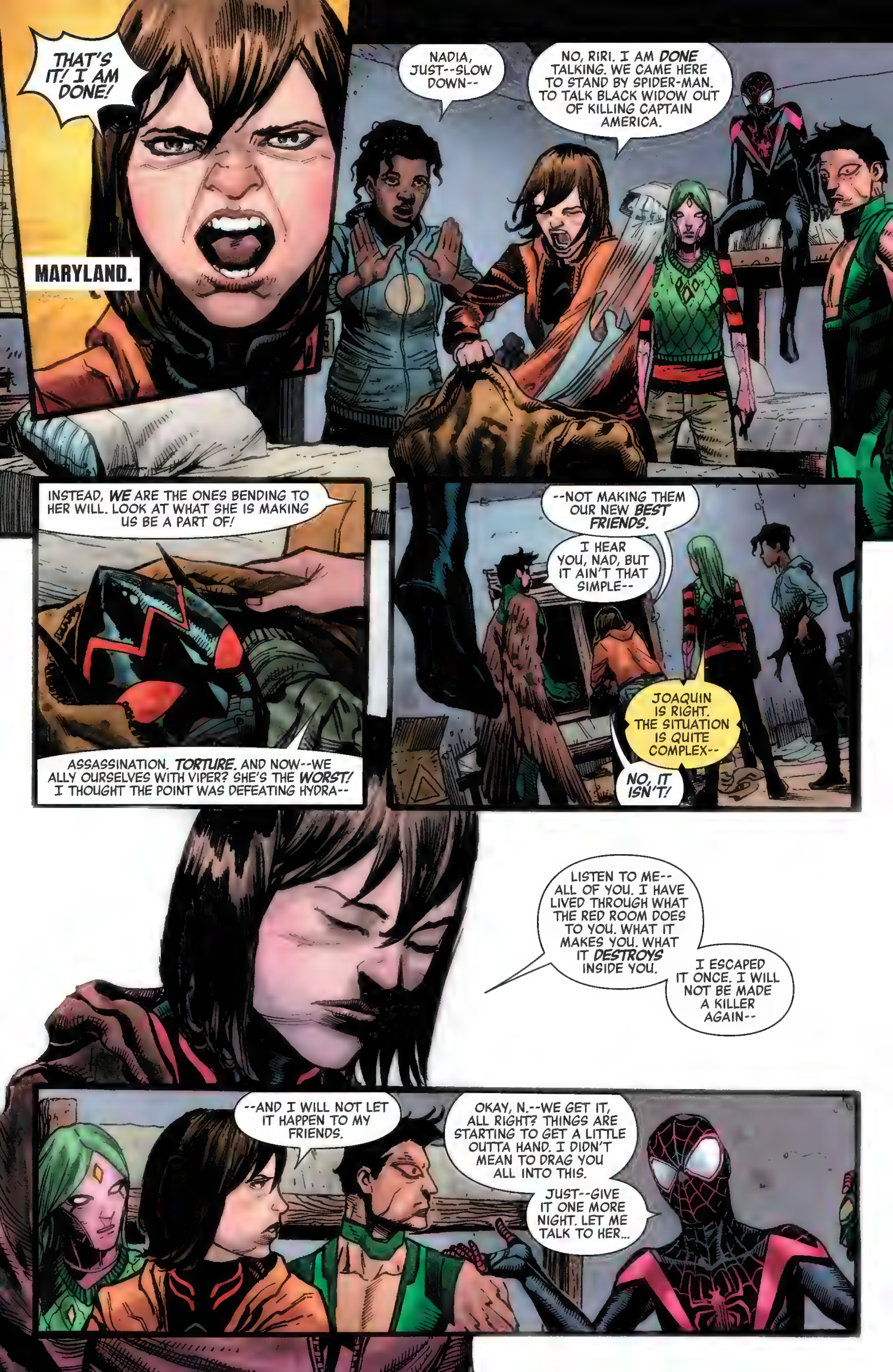

Wasp

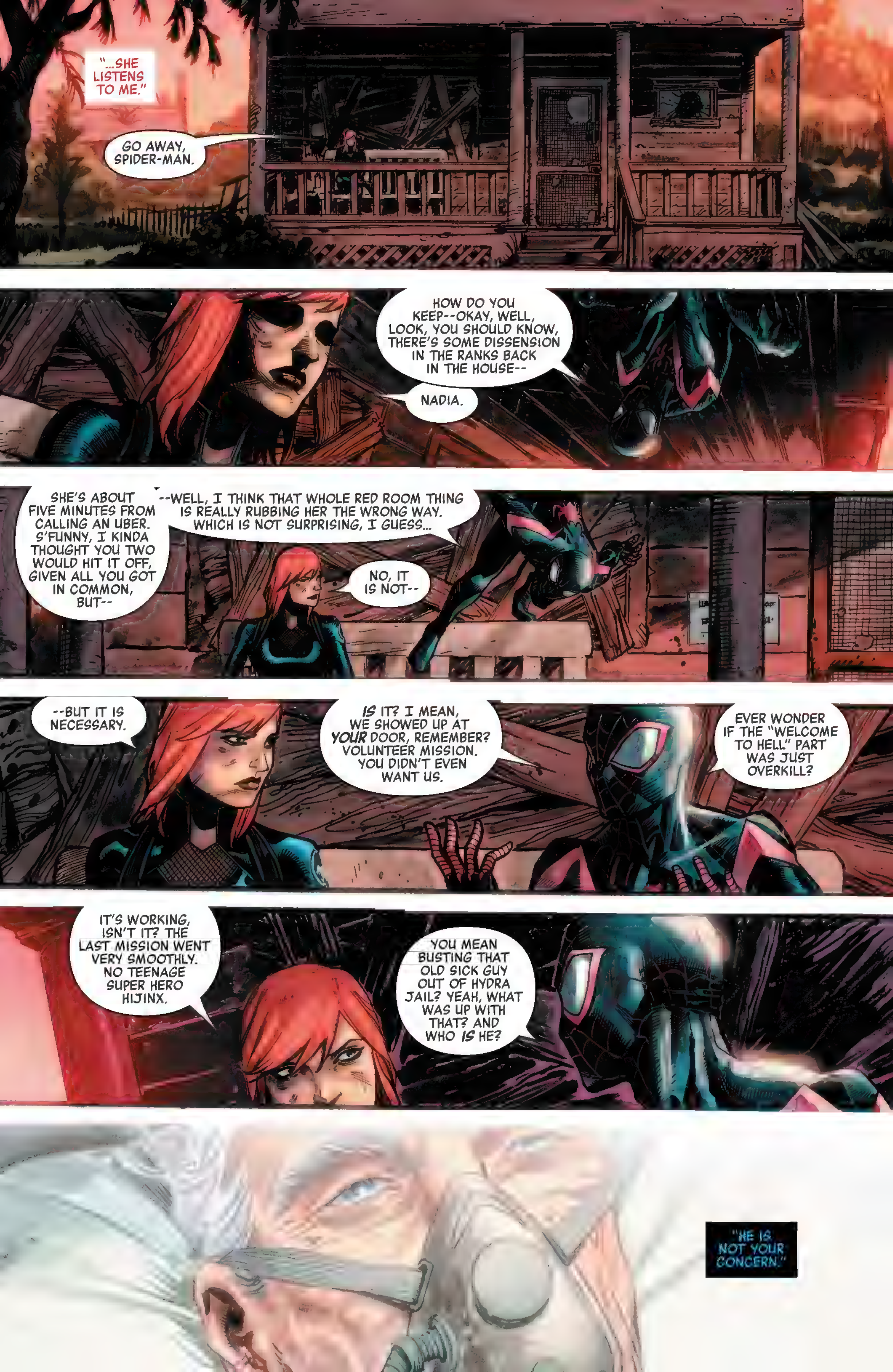

Spider-Man

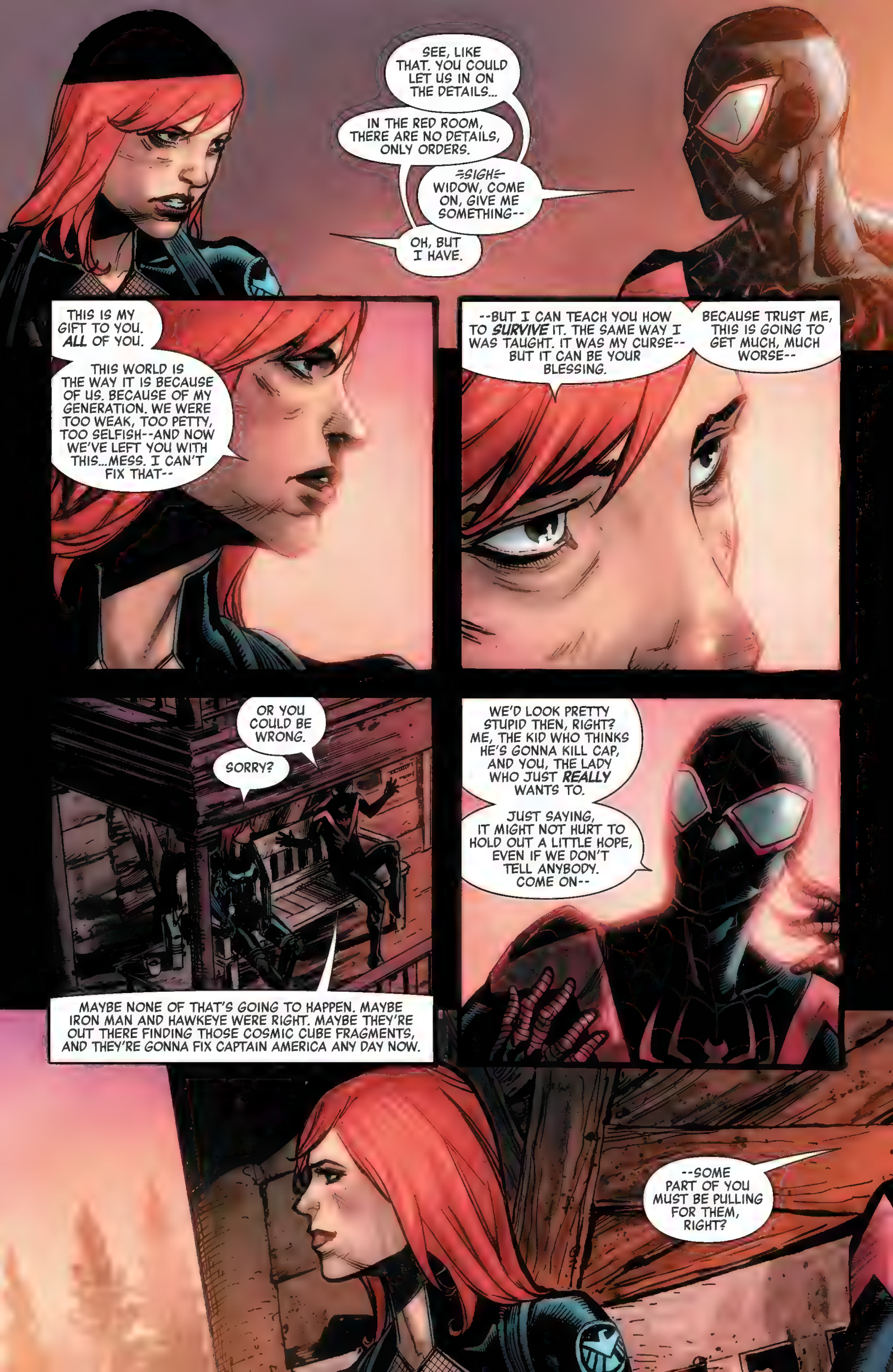

Viv Vision

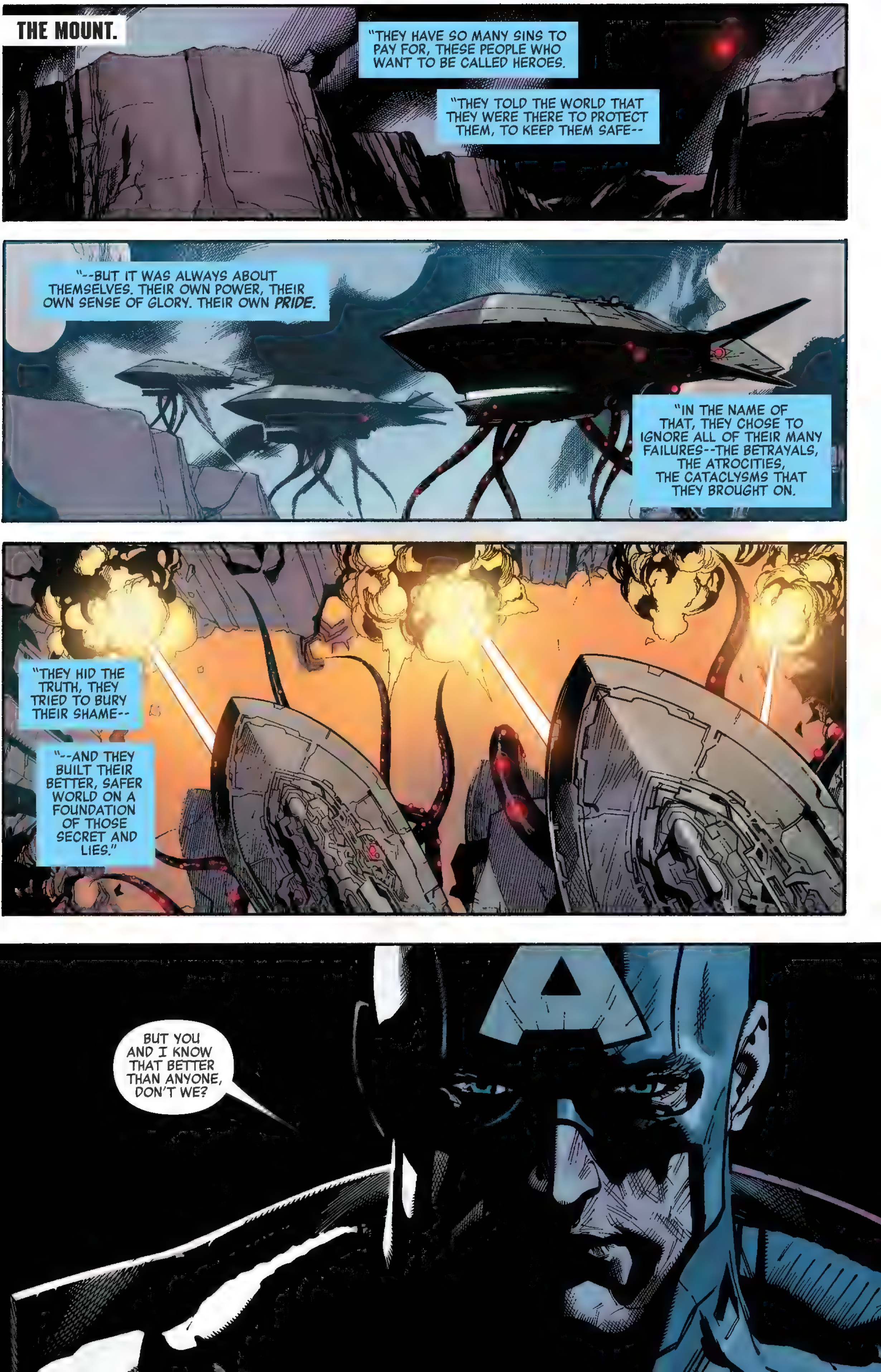

Ironheart

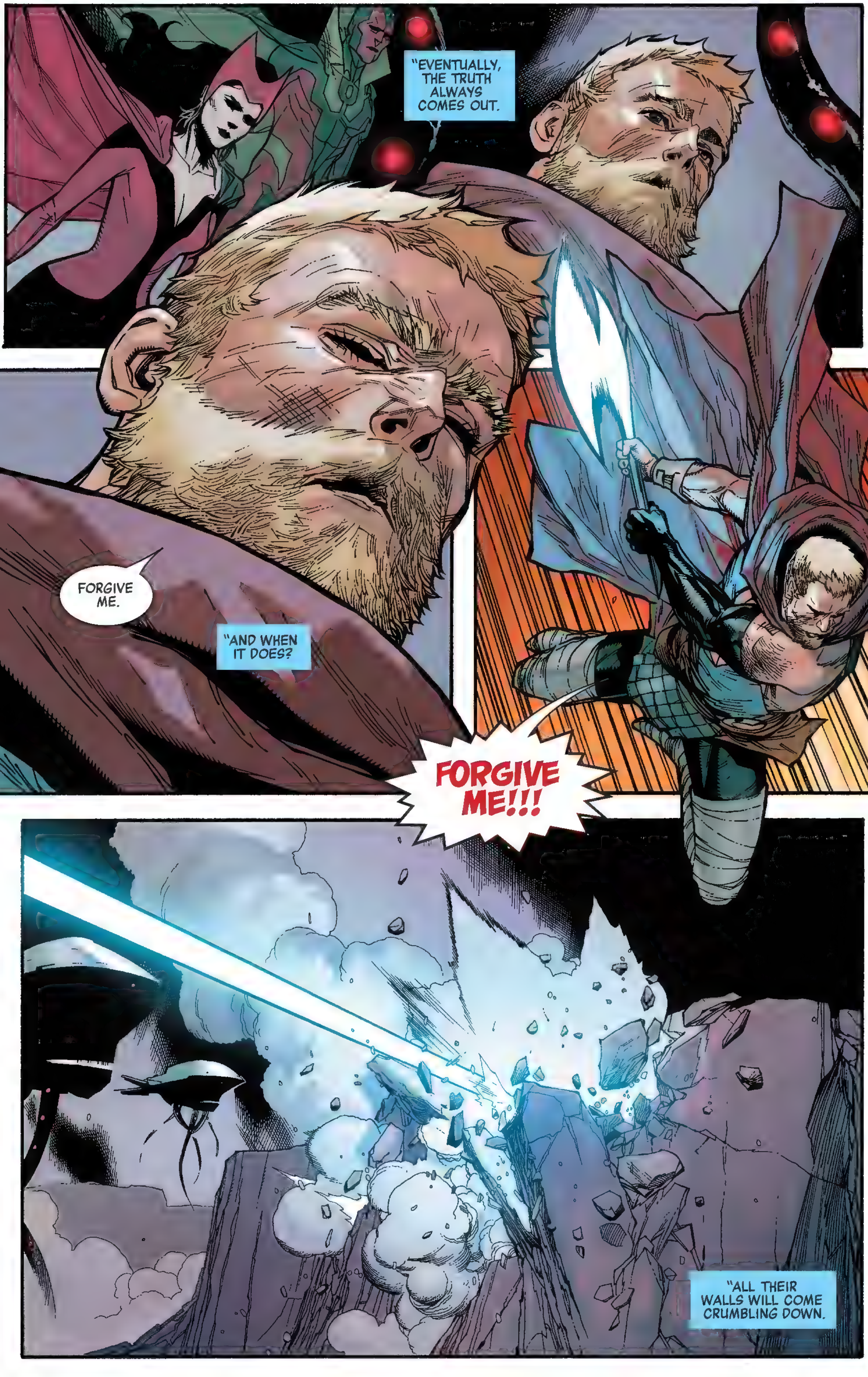

Falcon

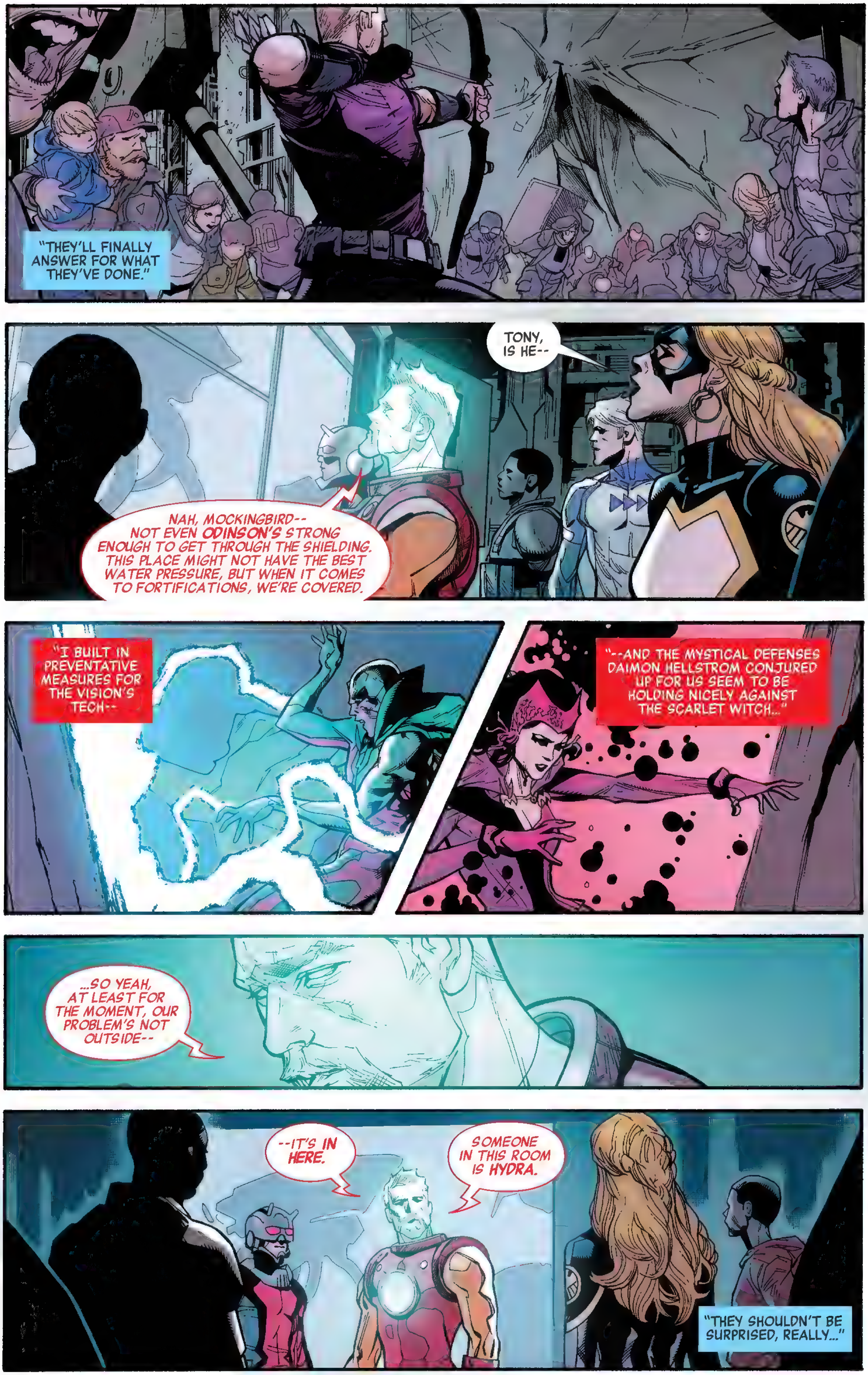

THAT'S IT! I AM DONE!
MARYLAND.
NADIA, JUST--SLOW DOWN--
NO, RIRI. I AM DONE TALKING. WE CAME HERE TO STAND BY SPIDER-MAN. TO TALK BLACK WIDOW OUT OF KILLING CAPTAIN AMERICA.
INSTEAD, WE ARE THE ONES BENDING TO HER WILL. LOOK AT WHAT SHE IS MAKING US BE A PART OF!
ASSASSINATION. TORTURE. AND NOW--WE ALLY OURSELVES WITH VIPER? SHE'S THE WORST! I THOUGHT THE POINT WAS DEFEATING HYDRA--
--NOT MAKING THEM OUR NEW BEST FRIENDS.
I HEAR YOU, NAD, BUT IT AIN'T THAT SIMPLE--
JOAQUIN IS RIGHT. THE SITUATION IS QUITE COMPLEX--
NO, IT ISN'T!
LISTEN TO ME--ALL OF YOU. I HAVE LIVED THROUGH WHAT THE RED ROOM DOES TO YOU. WHAT IT MAKES YOU. WHAT IT DESTROYS INSIDE YOU.
I ESCAPED IT ONCE. I WILL NOT BE MADE A KILLER AGAIN--
--AND I WILL NOT LET IT HAPPEN TO MY FRIENDS.
OKAY, N.--WE GET IT, ALL RIGHT? THINGS ARE STARTING TO GET A LITTLE OUTTA HAND. I DIDN'T MEAN TO DRAG YOU ALL INTO THIS.
JUST--GIVE IT ONE MORE NIGHT. LET ME TALK TO HER...

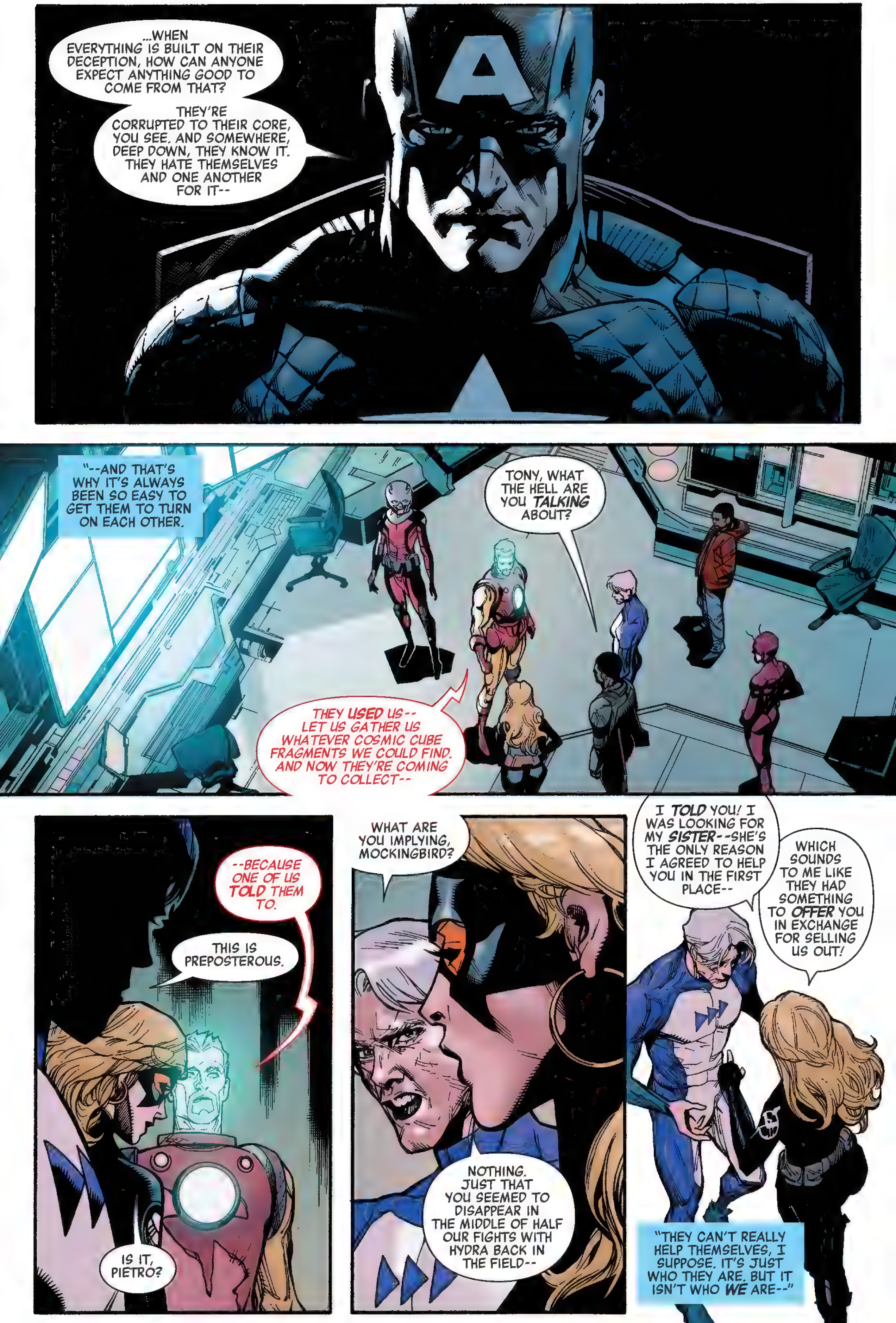

"...SHE LISTENS TO ME."
GO AWAY, SPIDER-MAN.
HOW DO YOU KEEP--OKAY, WELL, LOOK, YOU SHOULD KNOW, THERE'S SOME DISSENSION IN THE RANKS BACK IN THE HOUSE--
NADIA.
SHE'S ABOUT FIVE MINUTES FROM CALLING AN UBER. S'FUNNY, I KINDA THOUGHT YOU TWO WOULD HIT IT OFF, GIVEN ALL YOU GOT IN COMMON, BUT--
--WELL, I THINK THAT WHOLE RED ROOM THING IS REALLY RUBBING HER THE WRONG WAY. WHICH IS NOT SURPRISING, I GUESS...
NO, IT IS NOT--
--BUT IT IS NECESSARY.
IS IT? I MEAN, WE SHOWED UP AT YOUR DOOR, REMEMBER? VOLUNTEER MISSION. YOU DIDN'T EVEN WANT US.
EVER WONDER IF THE "WELCOME TO HELL" PART WAS JUST OVERKILL?
IT'S WORKING, ISN'T IT? THE LAST MISSION WENT VERY SMOOTHLY. NO TEENAGE SUPER HERO HIJINX.
YOU MEAN BUSTING THAT OLD SICK GUY OUT OF HYDRA JAIL? YEAH, WHAT WAS UP WITH THAT? AND WHO IS HE?
"HE IS NOT YOUR CONCERN."

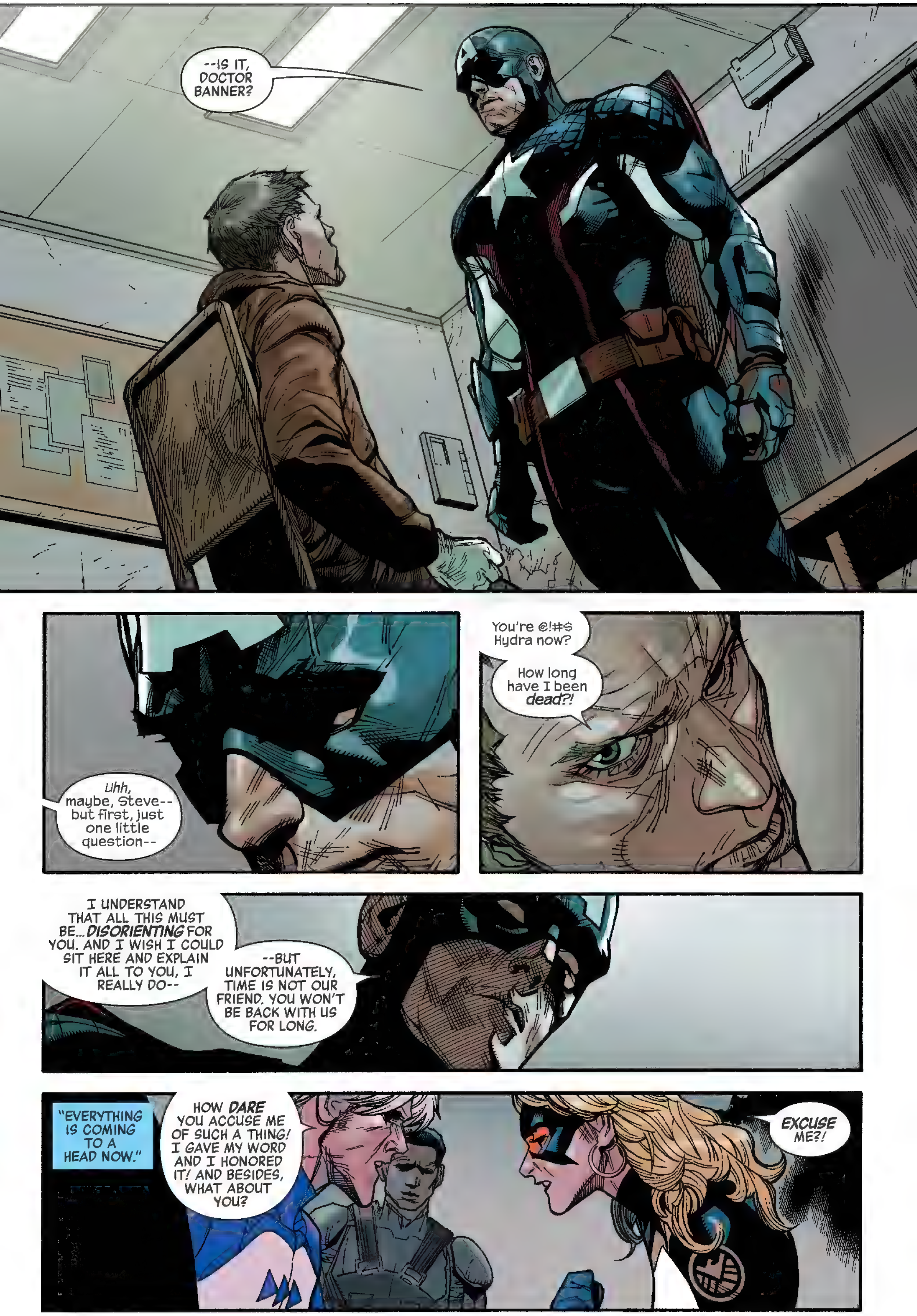

SEE, LIKE THAT. YOU COULD LET US IN ON THE DETAILS...
IN THE RED ROOM, THERE ARE NO DETAILS, ONLY ORDERS.
=SIGH= WIDOW, COME ON, GIVE ME SOMETHING--
OH, BUT I HAVE.
THIS IS MY GIFT TO YOU. ALL OF YOU.
THIS WORLD IS THE WAY IT IS BECAUSE OF US. BECAUSE OF MY GENERATION. WE WERE TOO WEAK, TOO PETTY, TOO SELFISH--AND NOW WE'VE LEFT YOU WITH THIS...MESS. I CAN'T FIX THAT--
--BUT I CAN TEACH YOU HOW TO SURVIVE IT. THE SAME WAY I WAS TAUGHT. IT WAS MY CURSE--BUT IT CAN BE YOUR BLESSING.
BECAUSE TRUST ME, THIS IS GOING TO GET MUCH, MUCH WORSE--
OR YOU COULD BE WRONG.
SORRY?
MAYBE NONE OF THAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN. MAYBE IRON MAN AND HAWKEYE WERE RIGHT. MAYBE THEY'RE OUT THERE FINDING THOSE COSMIC CUBE FRAGMENTS, AND THEY'RE GONNA FIX CAPTAIN AMERICA ANY DAY NOW.
WE'D LOOK PRETTY STUPID THEN, RIGHT? ME, THE KID WHO THINKS HE'S GONNA KILL CAP, AND YOU, THE LADY WHO JUST REALLY WANTS TO.
JUST SAYING, IT MIGHT NOT HURT TO HOLD OUT A LITTLE HOPE, EVEN IF WE DON'T TELL ANYBODY. COME ON--
--SOME PART OF YOU MUST BE PULLING FOR THEM, RIGHT?

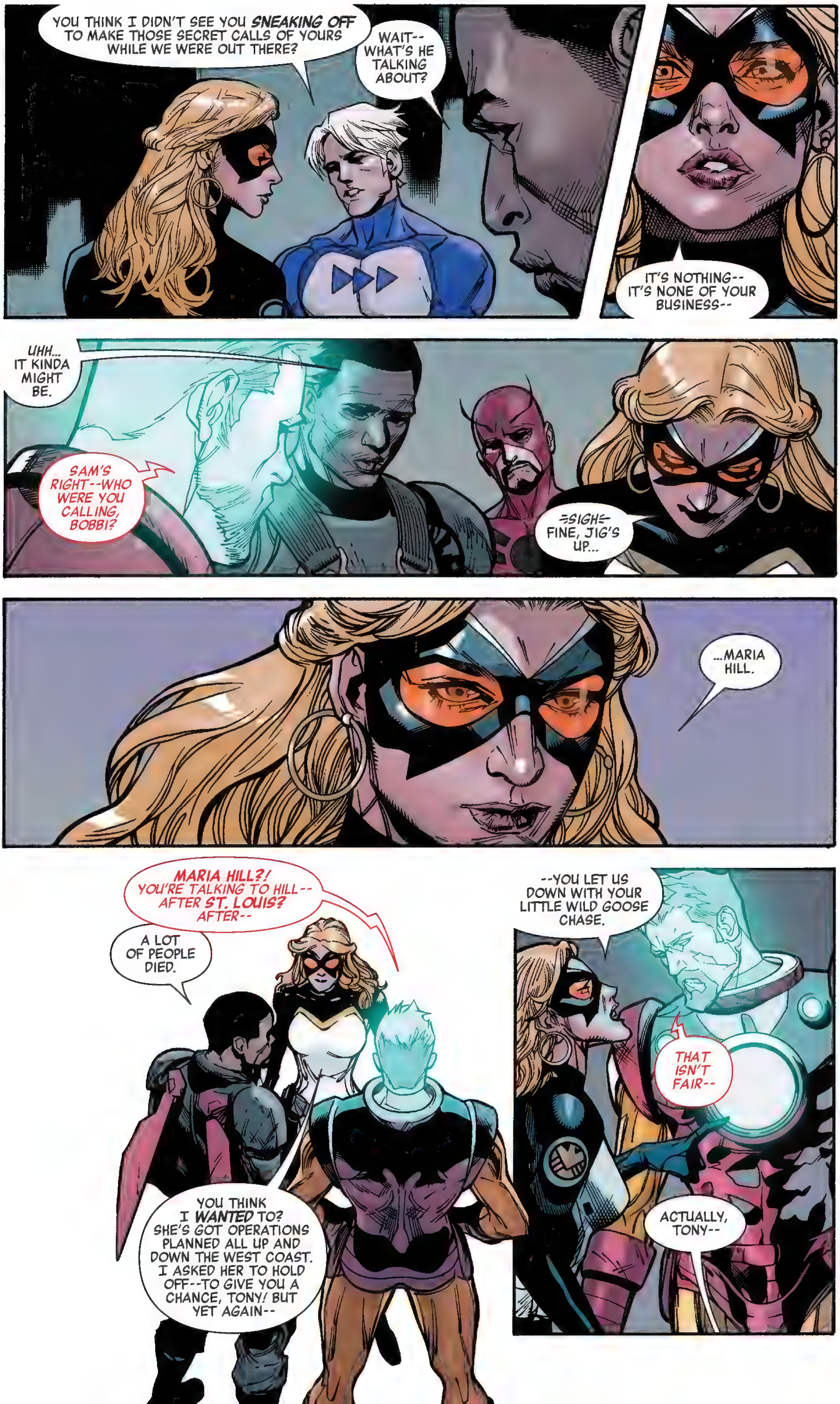

THE MOUNT.
"THEY HAVE SO MANY SINS TO PAY FOR, THESE PEOPLE WHO WANT TO BE CALLED HEROES.
"THEY TOLD THE WORLD THAT THEY WERE THERE TO PROTECT THEM, TO KEEP THEM SAFE--
"--BUT IT WAS ALWAYS ABOUT THEMSELVES. THEIR OWN POWER, THEIR OWN SENSE OF GLORY. THEIR OWN *PRIDE*.
"IN THE NAME OF THAT, THEY CHOSE TO IGNORE ALL OF THEIR MANY FAILURES--THE BETRAYALS, THE ATROCITIES, THE CATACLYSMS THAT THEY BROUGHT ON.
"THEY HID THE TRUTH, THEY TRIED TO BURY THEIR SHAME--
"--AND THEY BUILT THEIR BETTER, SAFER WORLD ON A FOUNDATION OF THOSE SECRET AND LIES."
BUT YOU AND I KNOW THAT BETTER THAN ANYONE, DON'T WE?

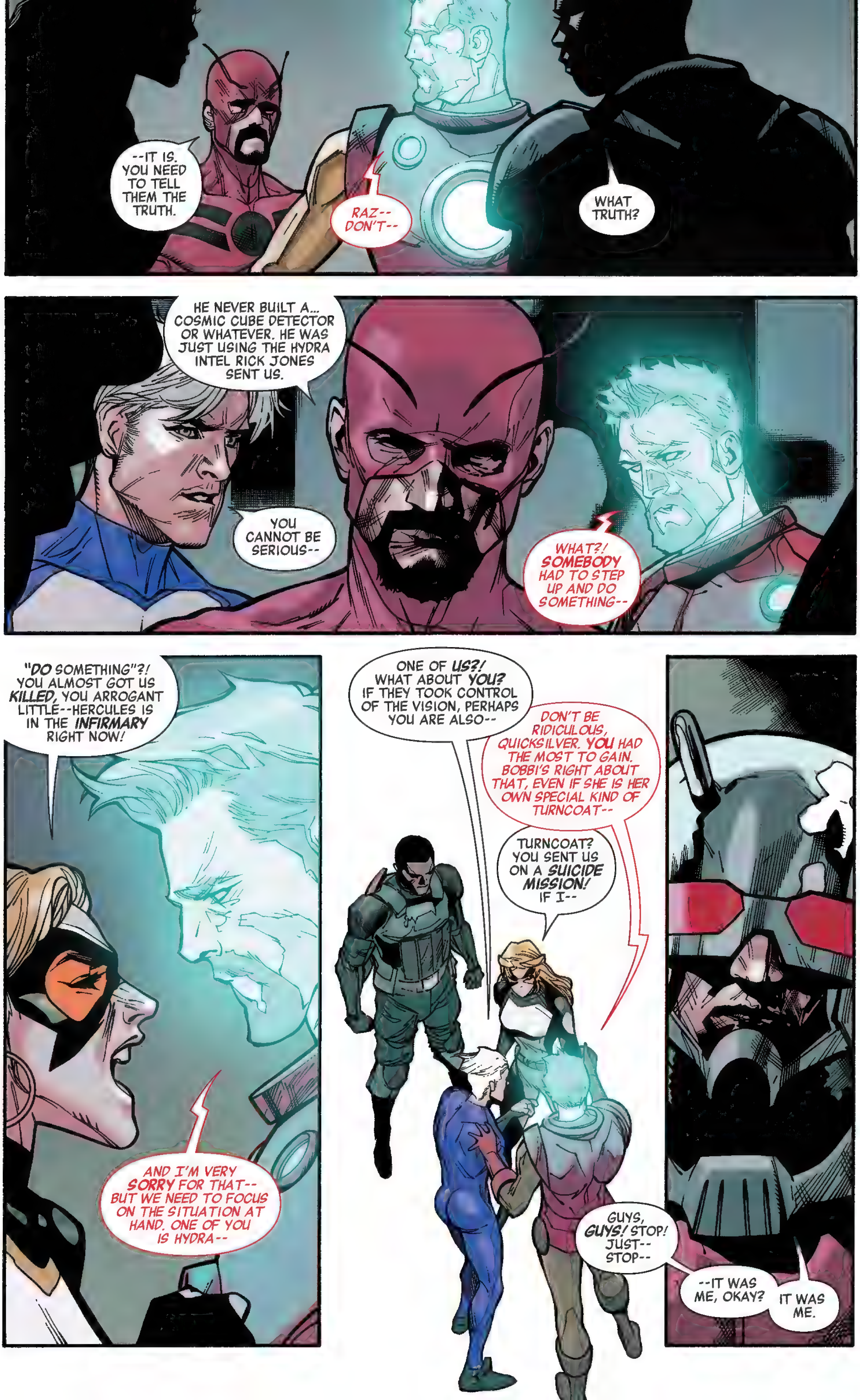

"EVENTUALLY, THE TRUTH ALWAYS COMES OUT.
FORGIVE ME.
"AND WHEN IT DOES?
FORGIVE ME!!!
"ALL THEIR WALLS WILL COME CRUMBLING DOWN.

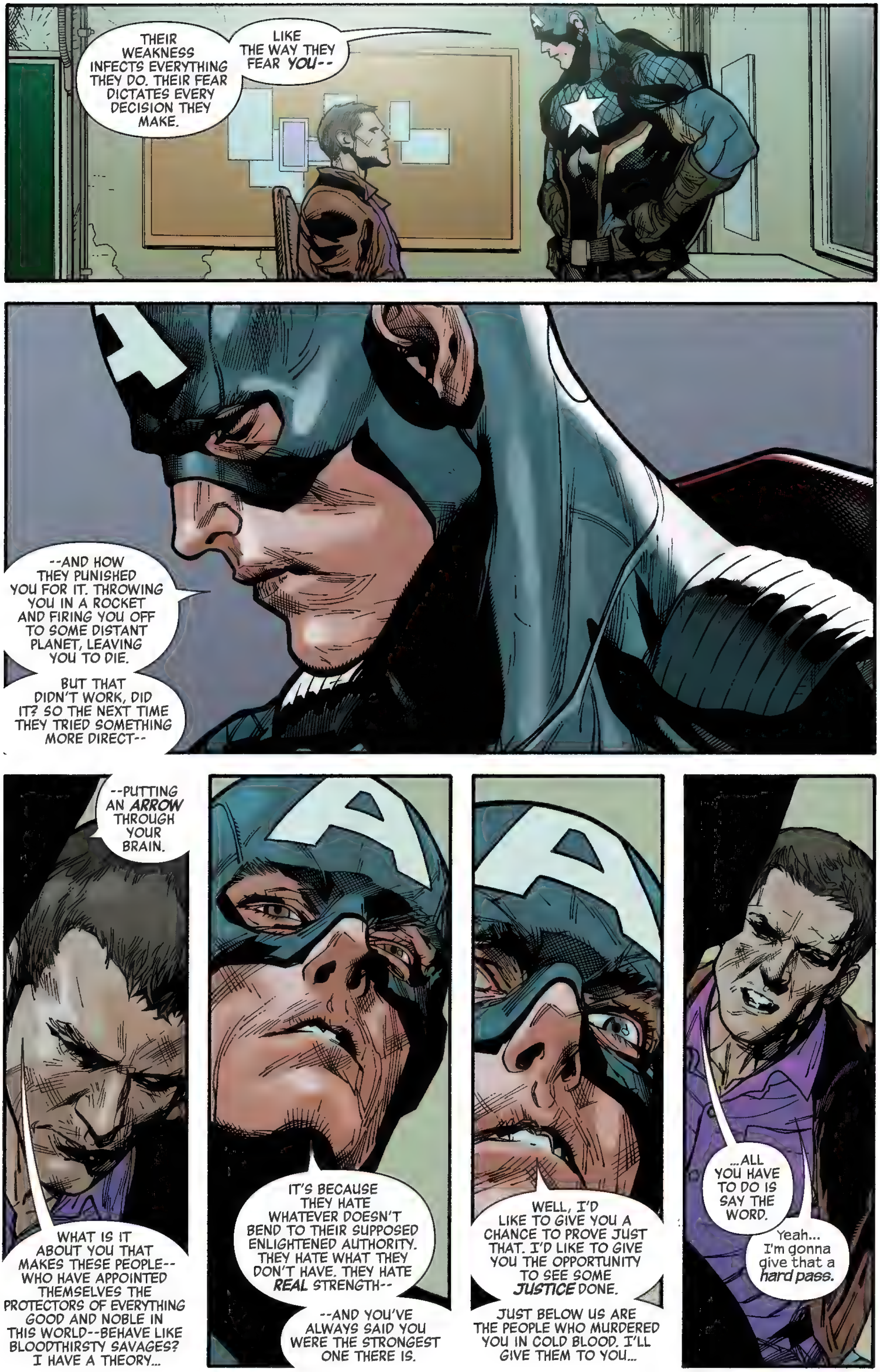

"THEY'LL FINALLY ANSWER FOR WHAT THEY'VE DONE."
TONY, IS HE--
NAH, MOCKINGBIRD-- NOT EVEN ODINSON'S STRONG ENOUGH TO GET THROUGH THE SHIELDING. THIS PLACE MIGHT NOT HAVE THE BEST WATER PRESSURE, BUT WHEN IT COMES TO FORTIFICATIONS, WE'RE COVERED.
"I BUILT IN PREVENTATIVE MEASURES FOR THE VISION'S TECH--
"--AND THE MYSTICAL DEFENSES DAIMON HELLSTROM CONJURED UP FOR US SEEM TO BE HOLDING NICELY AGAINST THE SCARLET WITCH..."
...SO YEAH, AT LEAST FOR THE MOMENT, OUR PROBLEM'S NOT OUTSIDE--
--IT'S IN HERE.
SOMEONE IN THIS ROOM IS HYDRA.
"THEY SHOULDN'T BE SURPRISED, REALLY..."

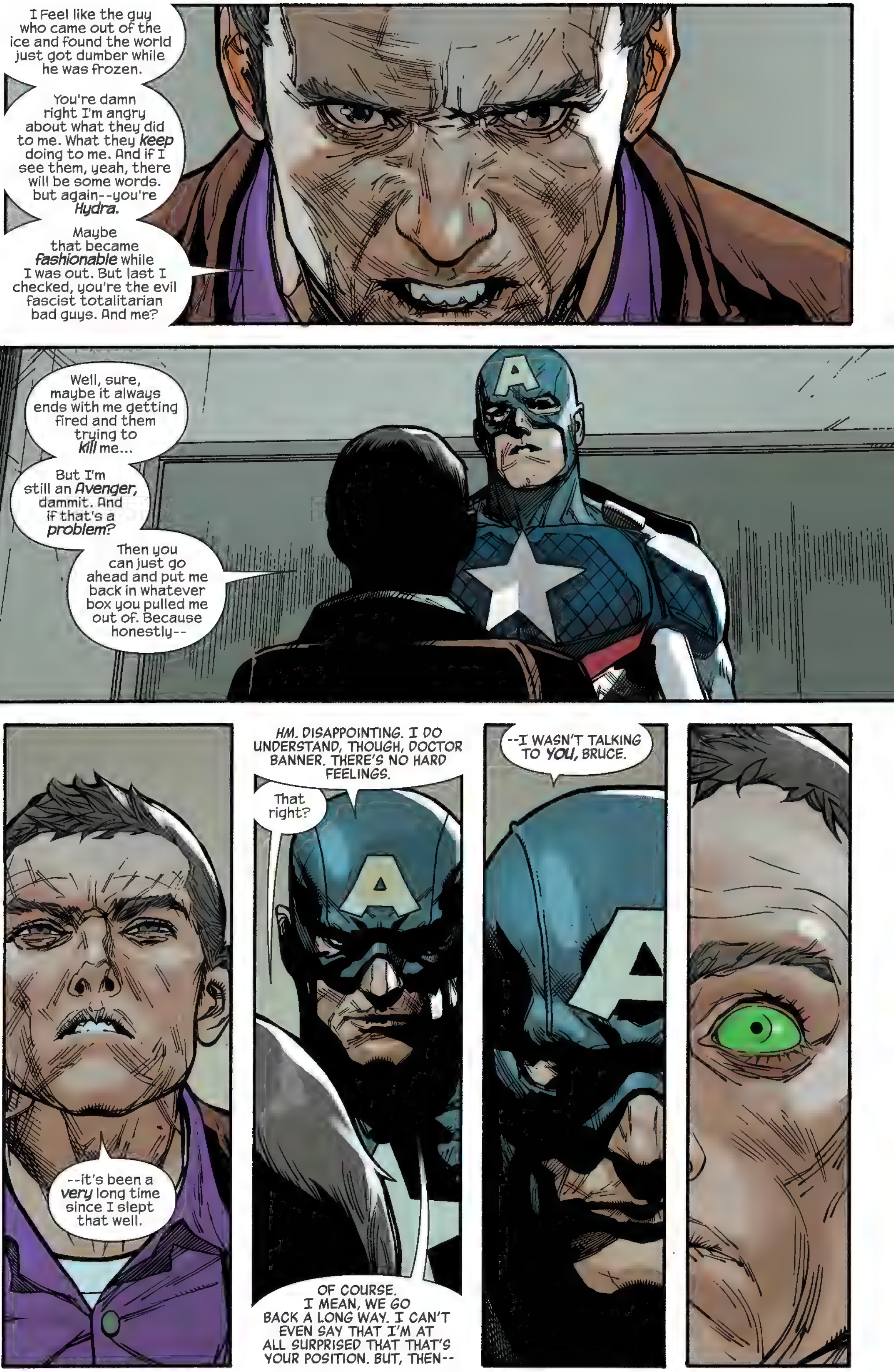

...WHEN EVERYTHING IS BUILT ON THEIR DECEPTION, HOW CAN ANYONE EXPECT ANYTHING GOOD TO COME FROM THAT?
THEY'RE CORRUPTED TO THEIR CORE, YOU SEE. AND SOMEWHERE, DEEP DOWN, THEY KNOW IT. THEY HATE THEMSELVES AND ONE ANOTHER FOR IT--
"--AND THAT'S WHY IT'S ALWAYS BEEN SO EASY TO GET THEM TO TURN ON EACH OTHER.
TONY, WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU *TALKING* ABOUT?
THEY *USED* US--LET US GATHER US WHATEVER COSMIC CUBE FRAGMENTS WE COULD FIND. AND NOW THEY'RE COMING TO COLLECT--
--BECAUSE ONE OF US *TOLD* THEM TO.
THIS IS PREPOSTEROUS.
IS IT, PIETRO?
WHAT ARE YOU IMPLYING, MOCKINGBIRD?
NOTHING. JUST THAT YOU SEEMED TO DISAPPEAR IN THE MIDDLE OF HALF OUR FIGHTS WITH HYDRA BACK IN THE FIELD--
I *TOLD* YOU! I WAS LOOKING FOR MY *SISTER*--SHE'S THE ONLY REASON I AGREED TO HELP YOU IN THE FIRST PLACE--
WHICH SOUNDS TO ME LIKE THEY HAD SOMETHING TO *OFFER* YOU IN EXCHANGE FOR SELLING US OUT!
"THEY CAN'T REALLY HELP THEMSELVES, I SUPPOSE. IT'S JUST WHO THEY ARE. BUT IT ISN'T WHO *WE* ARE--"

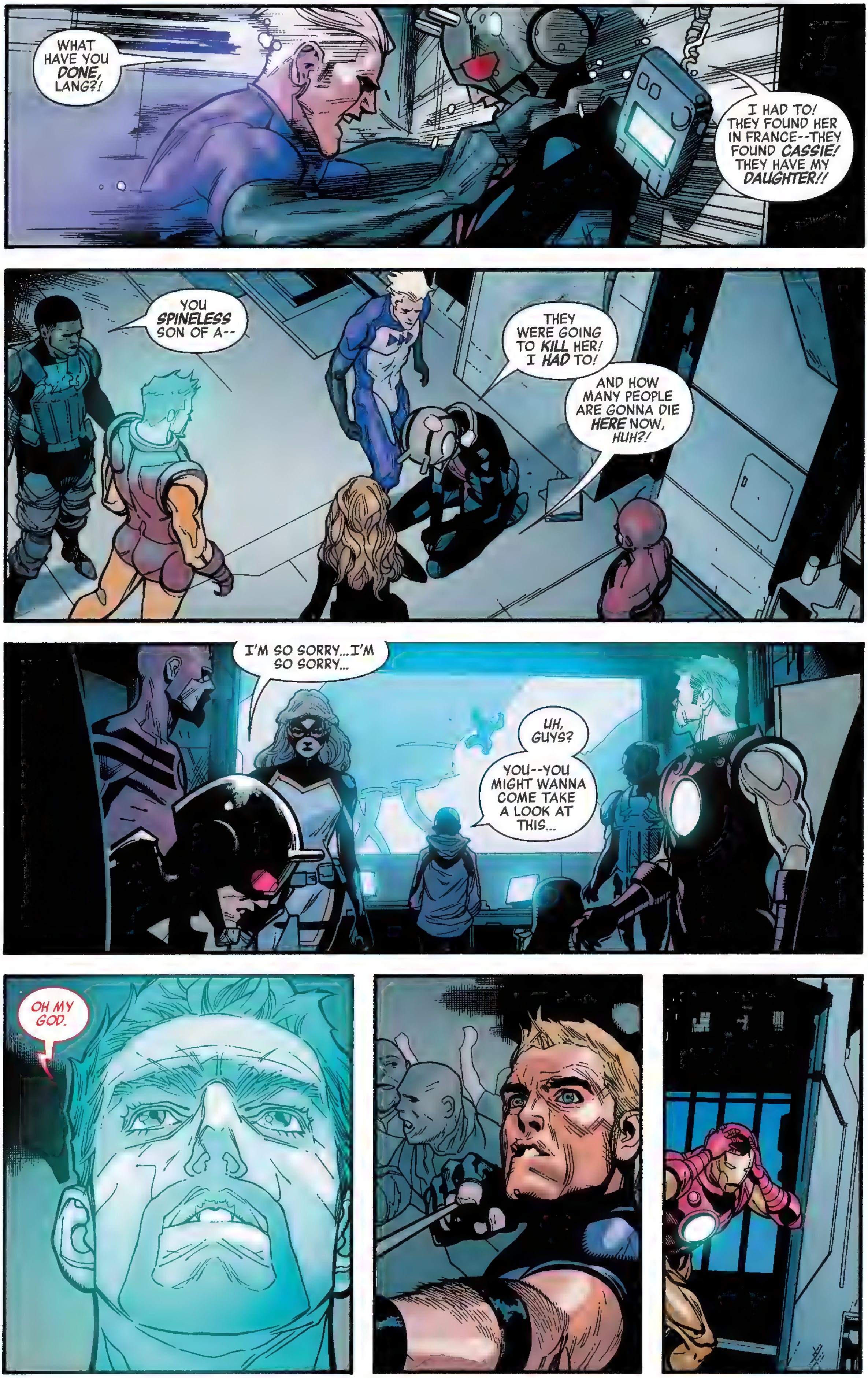

--IS IT, DOCTOR BANNER?
Uhh, maybe, Steve-- but first, just one little question--
You're @!#$ Hydra now?
How long have I been *dead?!*
I UNDERSTAND THAT ALL THIS MUST BE... ***DISORIENTING*** FOR YOU. AND I WISH I COULD SIT HERE AND EXPLAIN IT ALL TO YOU, I REALLY DO--
--BUT UNFORTUNATELY, TIME IS NOT OUR FRIEND. YOU WON'T BE BACK WITH US FOR LONG.
"EVERYTHING IS COMING TO A HEAD NOW."
HOW ***DARE*** YOU ACCUSE ME OF SUCH A THING! I GAVE MY WORD AND I HONORED IT! AND BESIDES, WHAT ABOUT YOU?
***EXCUSE*** ME?!

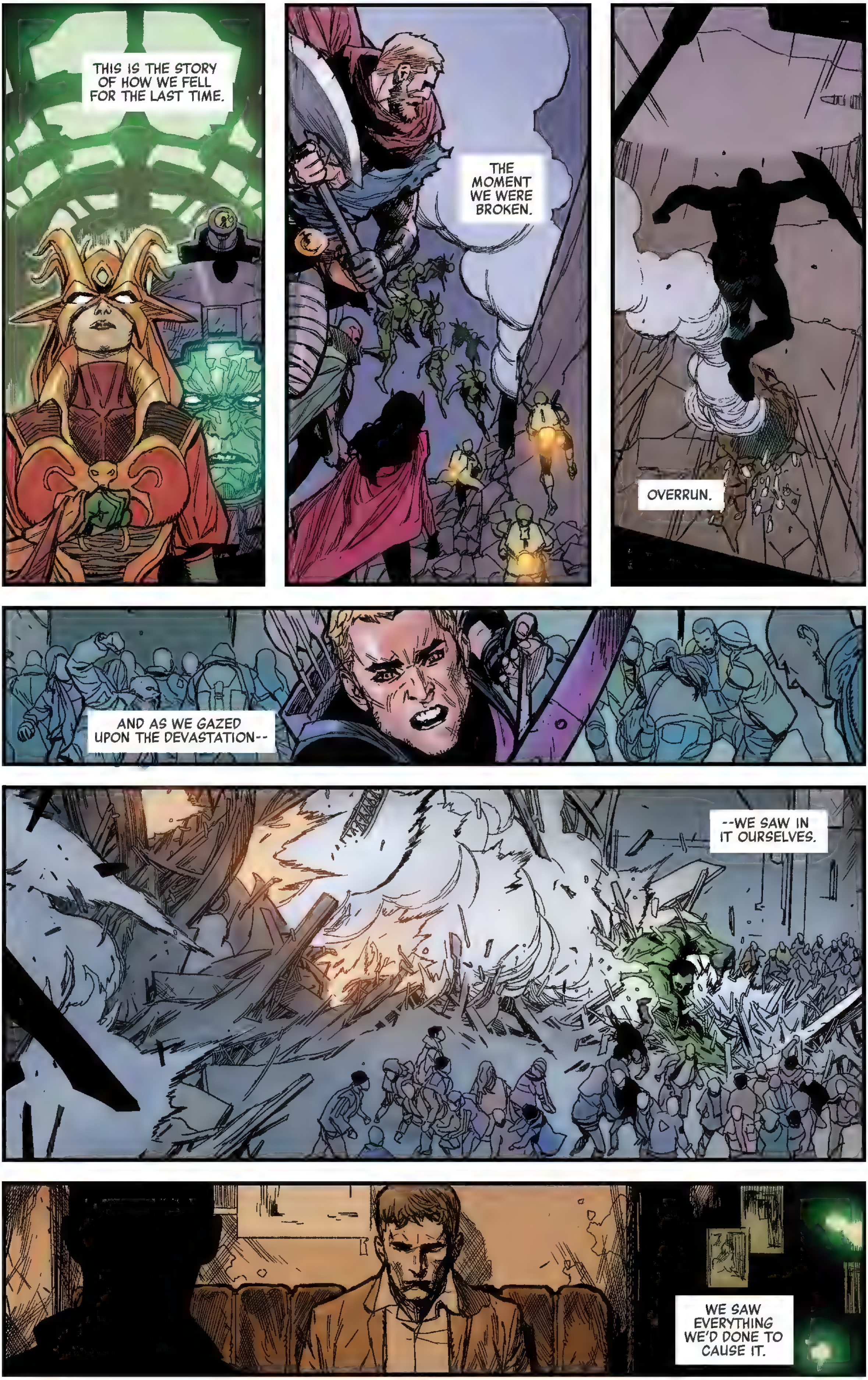

YOU THINK I DIDN'T SEE YOU *SNEAKING OFF* TO MAKE THOSE SECRET CALLS OF YOURS WHILE WE WERE OUT THERE?
WAIT-- WHAT'S HE TALKING ABOUT?
IT'S NOTHING-- IT'S NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS--
UHH... IT KINDA MIGHT BE.
SAM'S RIGHT--WHO WERE YOU CALLING, BOBBI?
=SIGH= FINE, JIG'S UP...
...MARIA HILL.
*MARIA HILL?!* YOU'RE TALKING TO HILL-- AFTER *ST. LOUIS?* AFTER--
A LOT OF PEOPLE DIED.
--YOU LET US DOWN WITH YOUR LITTLE WILD GOOSE CHASE.
THAT ISN'T FAIR--
YOU THINK I *WANTED* TO? SHE'S GOT OPERATIONS PLANNED ALL UP AND DOWN THE WEST COAST. I ASKED HER TO HOLD OFF--TO GIVE YOU A CHANCE, TONY! BUT YET AGAIN--
ACTUALLY, TONY--

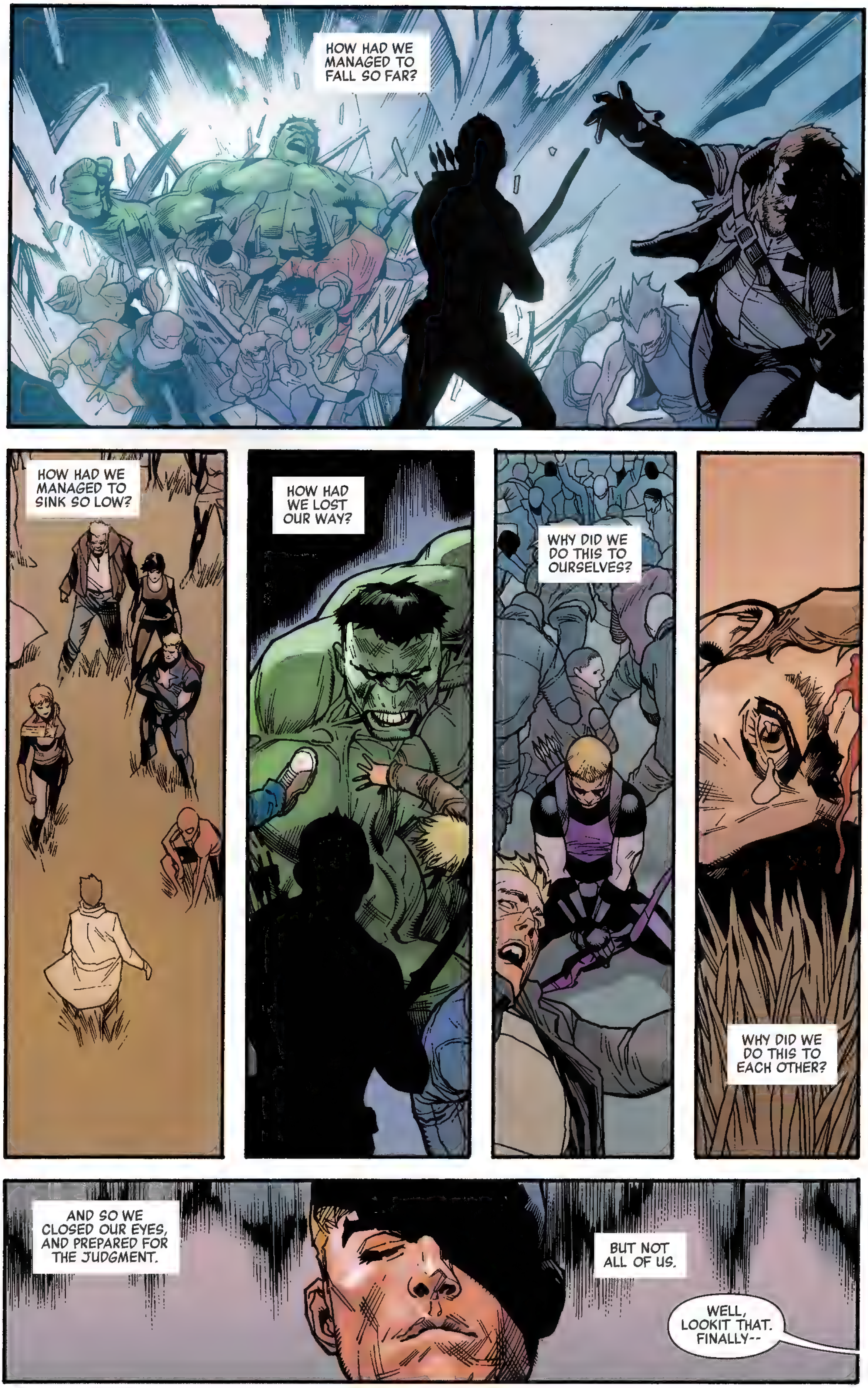

--IT IS. YOU NEED TO TELL THEM THE TRUTH.
RAZ-- DON'T--
WHAT TRUTH?
HE NEVER BUILT A... COSMIC CUBE DETECTOR OR WHATEVER. HE WAS JUST USING THE HYDRA INTEL RICK JONES SENT US.
YOU CANNOT BE SERIOUS--
WHAT?! **SOMEBODY** HAD TO STEP UP AND DO SOMETHING--
"**DO** SOMETHING"?! YOU ALMOST GOT US **KILLED**, YOU ARROGANT LITTLE--HERCULES IS IN THE **INFIRMARY** RIGHT NOW!
AND I'M VERY **SORRY** FOR THAT-- BUT WE NEED TO FOCUS ON THE SITUATION AT HAND. ONE OF YOU IS HYDRA--
ONE OF **US?!** WHAT ABOUT **YOU?** IF THEY TOOK CONTROL OF THE VISION, PERHAPS YOU ARE ALSO--
DON'T BE RIDICULOUS, QUICKSILVER. **YOU** HAD THE MOST TO GAIN. BOBBI'S RIGHT ABOUT THAT, EVEN IF SHE IS HER OWN SPECIAL KIND OF TURNCOAT--
TURNCOAT? YOU SENT US ON A **SUICIDE MISSION!** IF I--
GUYS, **GUYS!** STOP! JUST-- STOP--
--IT WAS ME, OKAY?
IT WAS ME.

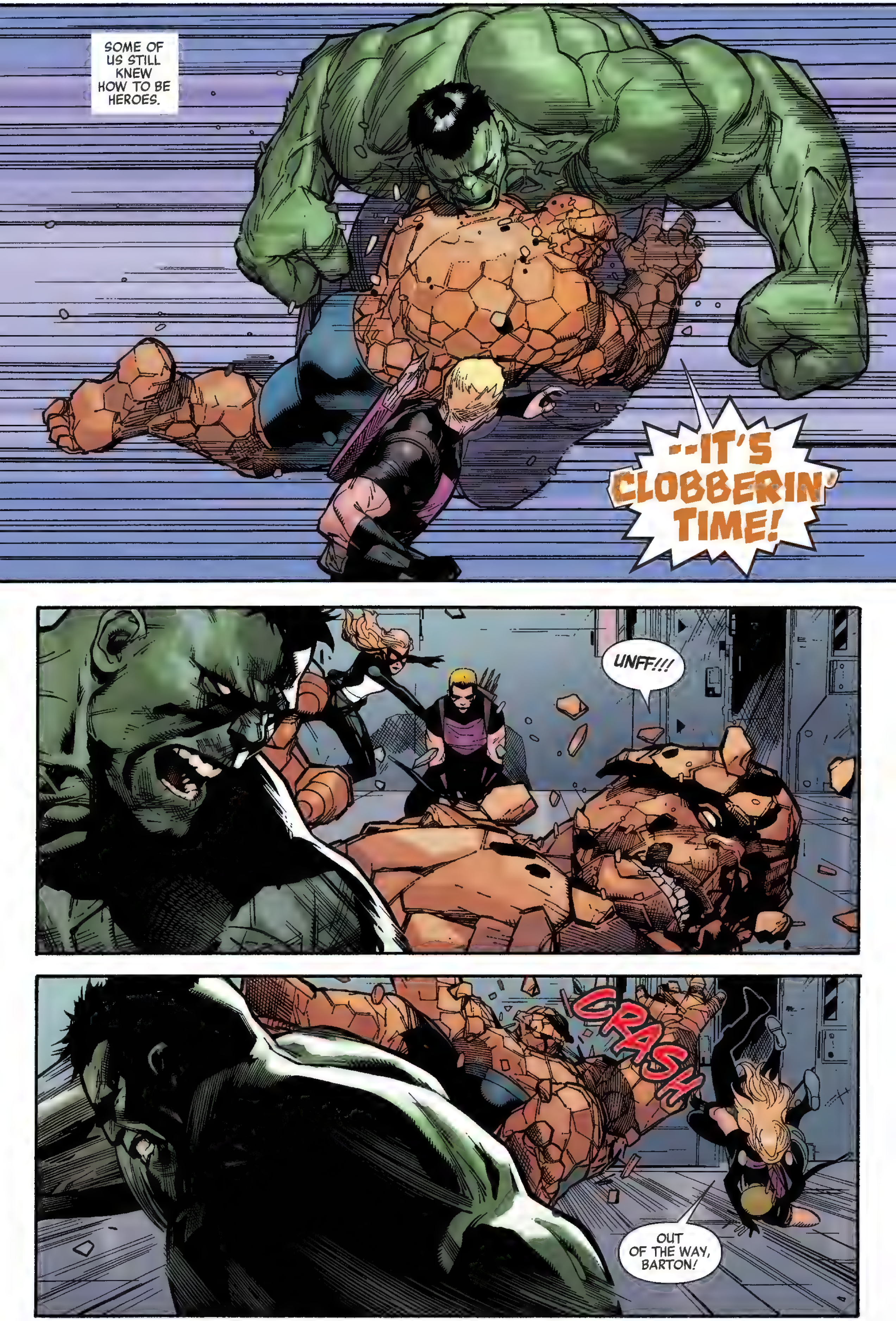

THEIR WEAKNESS INFECTS EVERYTHING THEY DO. THEIR FEAR DICTATES EVERY DECISION THEY MAKE.
LIKE THE WAY THEY FEAR *YOU*--
--AND HOW THEY PUNISHED YOU FOR IT. THROWING YOU IN A ROCKET AND FIRING YOU OFF TO SOME DISTANT PLANET, LEAVING YOU TO DIE.
BUT THAT DIDN'T WORK, DID IT? SO THE NEXT TIME THEY TRIED SOMETHING MORE DIRECT--
--PUTTING AN *ARROW* THROUGH YOUR BRAIN.
WHAT IS IT ABOUT YOU THAT MAKES THESE PEOPLE--WHO HAVE APPOINTED THEMSELVES THE PROTECTORS OF EVERYTHING GOOD AND NOBLE IN THIS WORLD--BEHAVE LIKE BLOODTHIRSTY SAVAGES? I HAVE A THEORY...
IT'S BECAUSE THEY HATE WHATEVER DOESN'T BEND TO THEIR SUPPOSED ENLIGHTENED AUTHORITY. THEY HATE WHAT THEY DON'T HAVE. THEY HATE *REAL* STRENGTH--
--AND YOU'VE ALWAYS SAID YOU WERE THE STRONGEST ONE THERE IS.
WELL, I'D LIKE TO GIVE YOU A CHANCE TO PROVE JUST THAT. I'D LIKE TO GIVE YOU THE OPPORTUNITY TO SEE SOME *JUSTICE* DONE.
JUST BELOW US ARE THE PEOPLE WHO MURDERED YOU IN COLD BLOOD. I'LL GIVE THEM TO YOU...
...ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS SAY THE WORD.
Yeah... I'm gonna give that a *hard pass.*

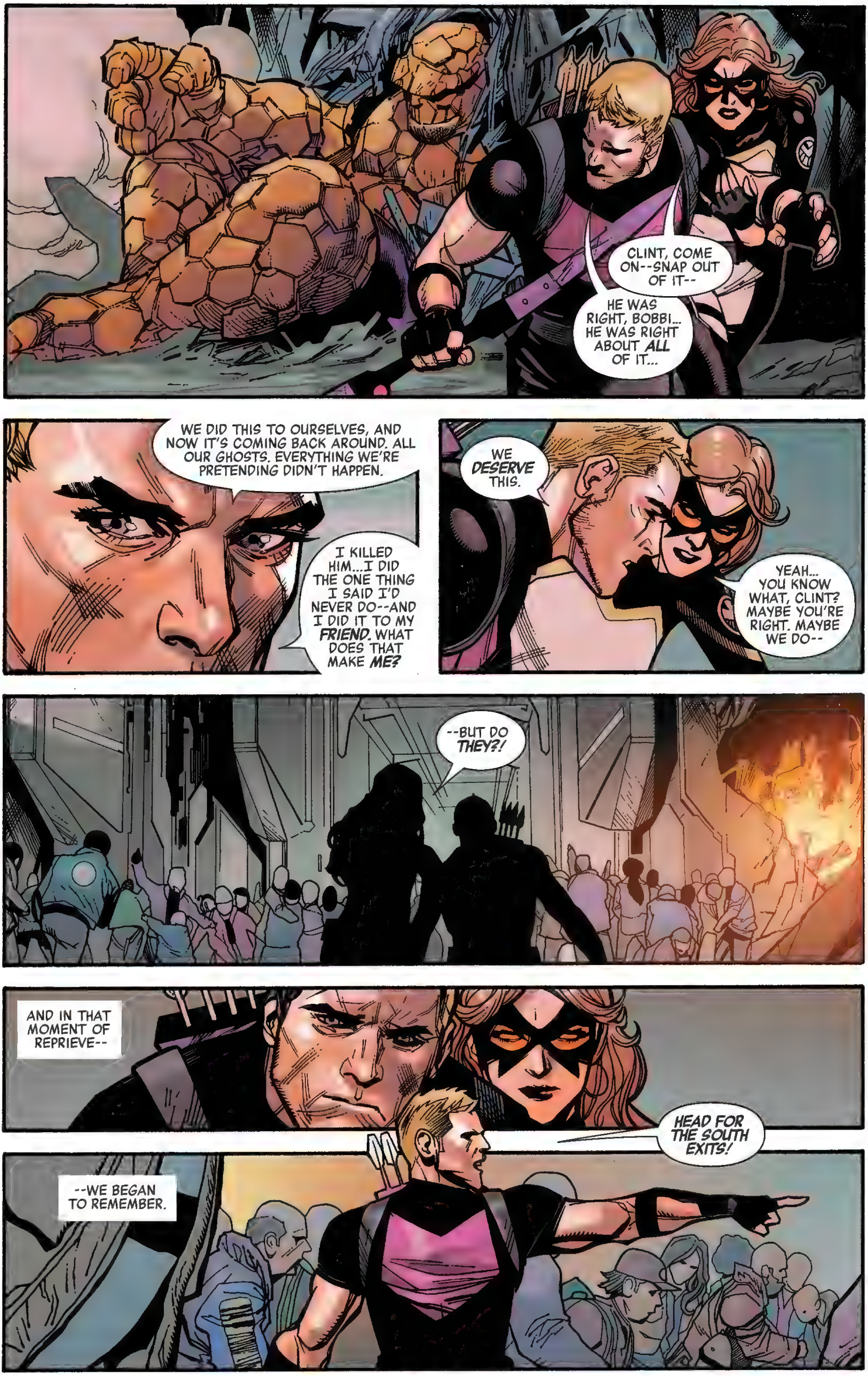

I Feel like the guy who came out of the ice and found the world just got dumber while he was frozen.
You're damn right I'm angry about what they did to me. What they *keep* doing to me. And if I see them, yeah, there will be some words. but again--you're *Hydra.*
Maybe that became *fashionable* while I was out. But last I checked, you're the evil fascist totalitarian bad guys. And me?
Well, sure, maybe it always ends with me getting fired and them trying to *kill* me...
But I'm still an *Avenger,* dammit. And if that's a *problem?*
Then you can just go ahead and put me back in whatever box you pulled me out of. Because honestly--
--it's been a *very* long time since I slept that well.
*HM.* DISAPPOINTING. I DO UNDERSTAND, THOUGH, DOCTOR BANNER. THERE'S NO HARD FEELINGS.
That right?
OF COURSE. I MEAN, WE GO BACK A LONG WAY. I CAN'T EVEN SAY THAT I'M AT ALL SURPRISED THAT THAT'S YOUR POSITION. BUT, THEN--
--I WASN'T TALKING TO *YOU,* BRUCE.

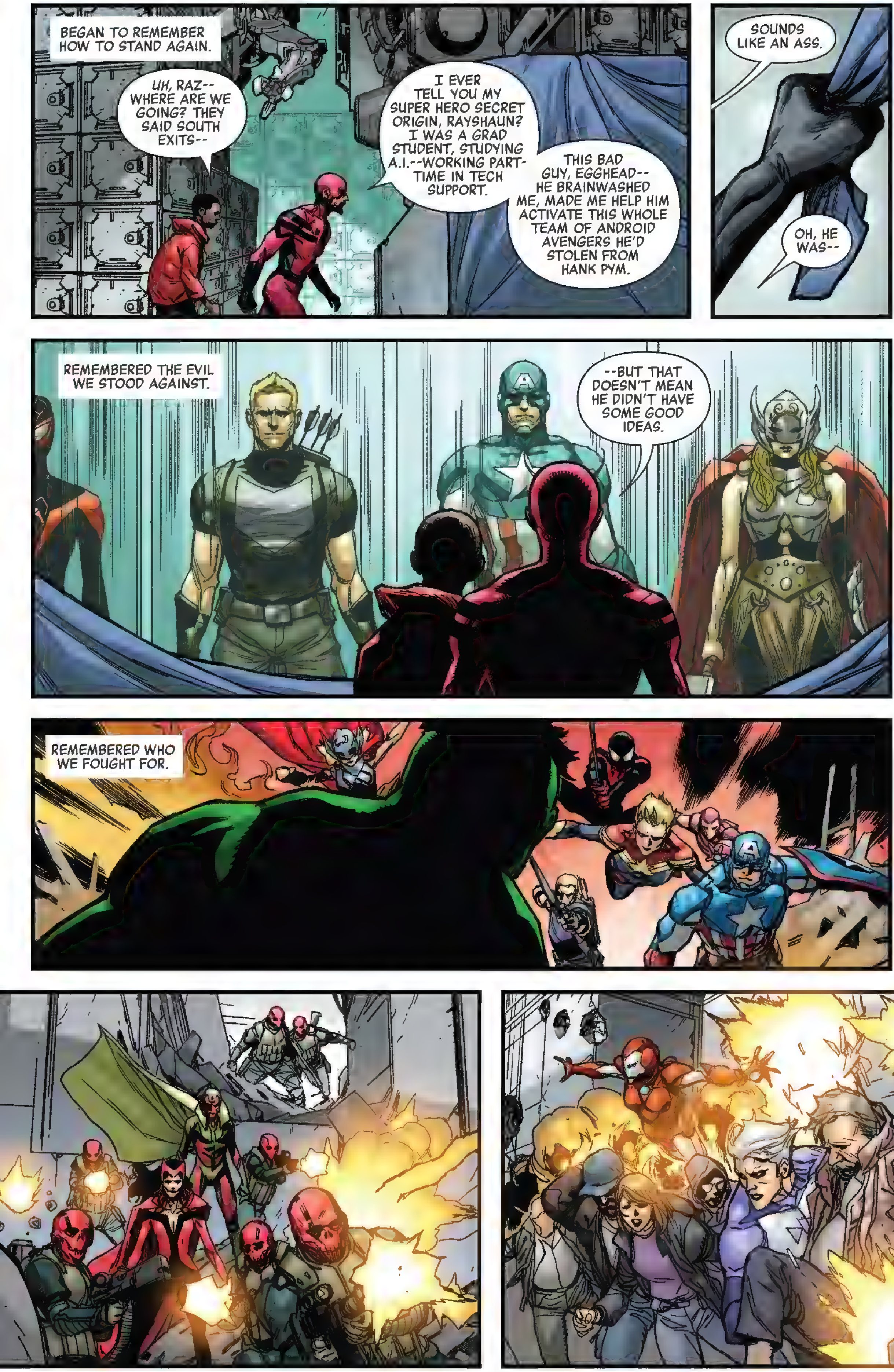

WHAT HAVE YOU *DONE,* LANG?!
I HAD TO! THEY FOUND HER IN FRANCE--THEY FOUND *CASSIE!* THEY HAVE MY *DAUGHTER!!*
YOU *SPINELESS* SON OF A--
THEY WERE GOING TO *KILL* HER! I *HAD* TO!
AND HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE GONNA DIE *HERE* NOW, HUH?!
I'M SO SORRY...I'M SO SORRY...
UH, GUYS?
YOU--YOU MIGHT WANNA COME TAKE A LOOK AT THIS...
OH MY GOD.

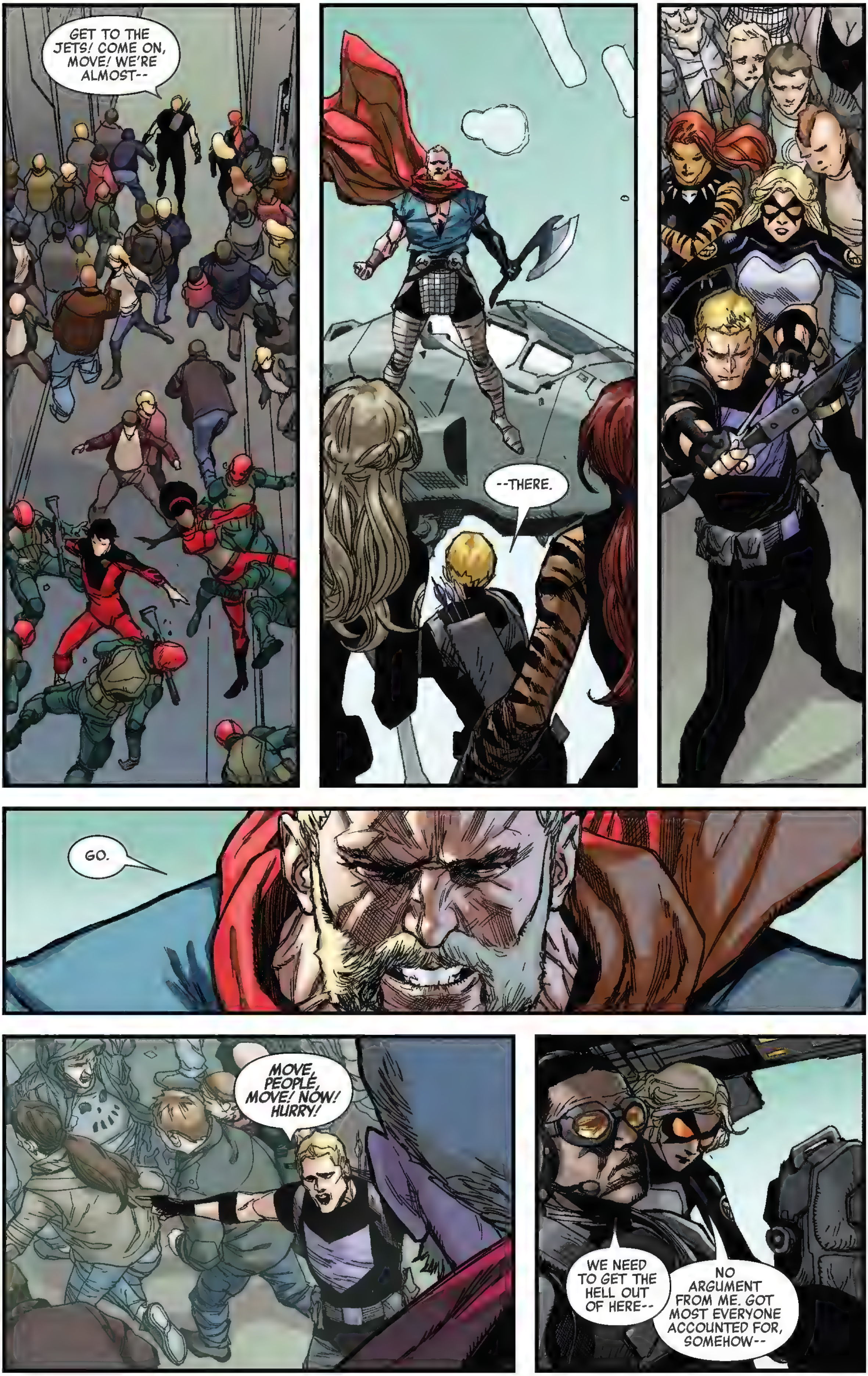

THIS IS THE STORY OF HOW WE FELL FOR THE LAST TIME.
THE MOMENT WE WERE BROKEN.
OVERRUN.
AND AS WE GAZED UPON THE DEVASTATION--
--WE SAW IN IT OURSELVES.
WE SAW EVERYTHING WE'D DONE TO CAUSE IT.

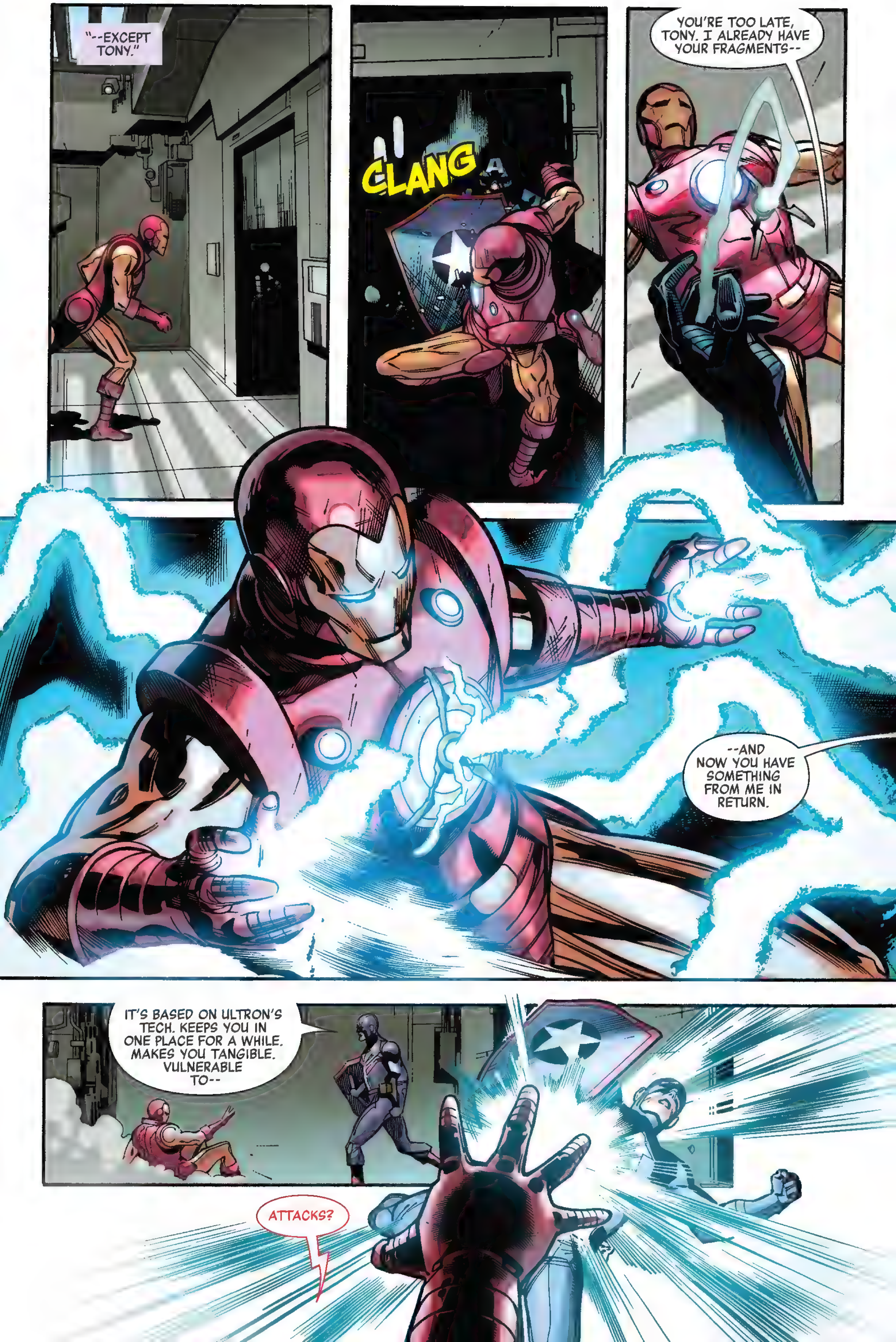

HOW HAD WE MANAGED TO FALL SO FAR?
HOW HAD WE MANAGED TO SINK SO LOW?
HOW HAD WE LOST OUR WAY?
WHY DID WE DO THIS TO OURSELVES?
WHY DID WE DO THIS TO EACH OTHER?
AND SO WE CLOSED OUR EYES, AND PREPARED FOR THE JUDGMENT.
BUT NOT ALL OF US.
WELL, LOOKIT THAT. FINALLY--

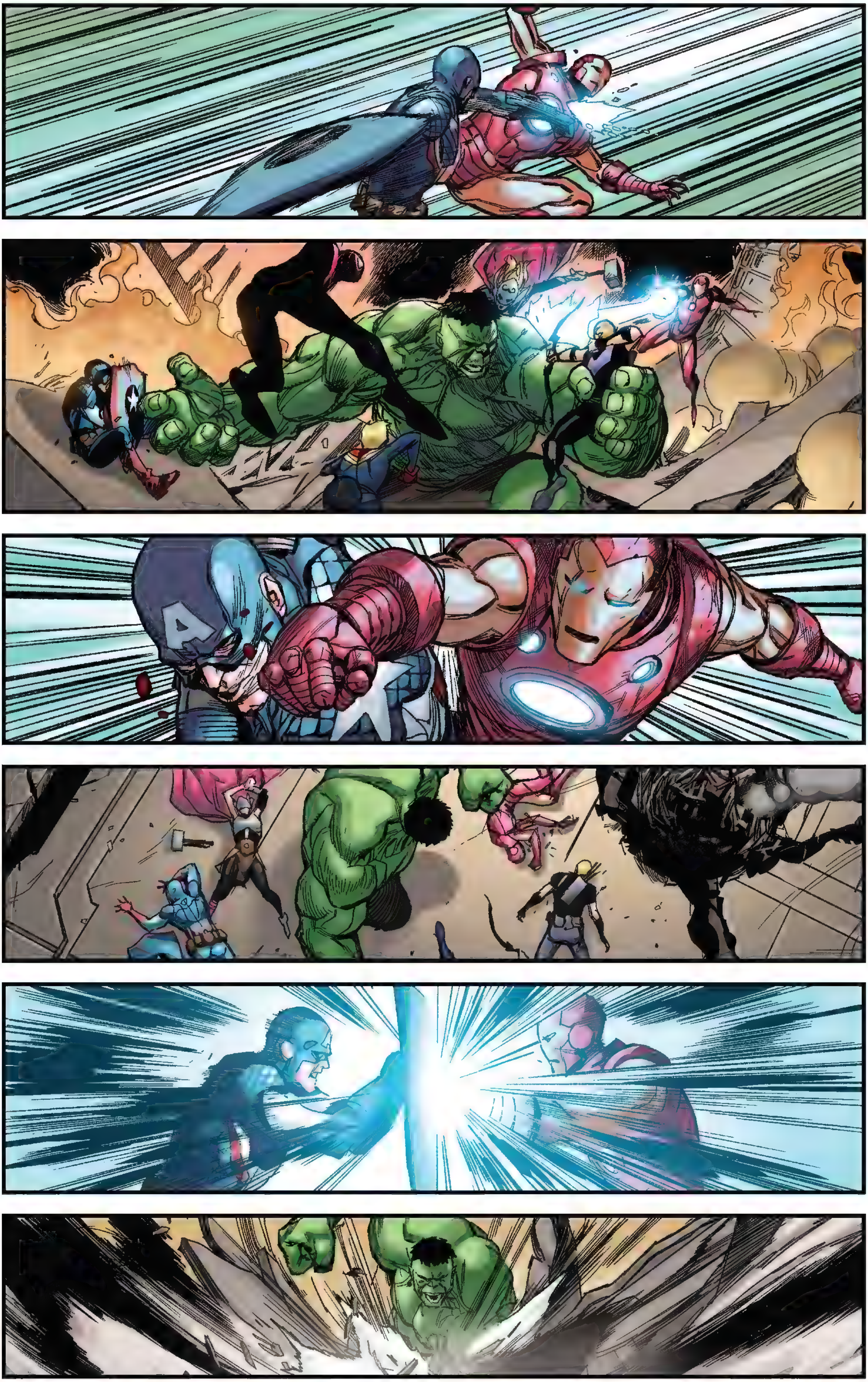

SOME OF US STILL KNEW HOW TO BE HEROES.
--IT'S CLOBBERIN' TIME!
UNFF!!!
CRASH
OUT OF THE WAY, BARTON!

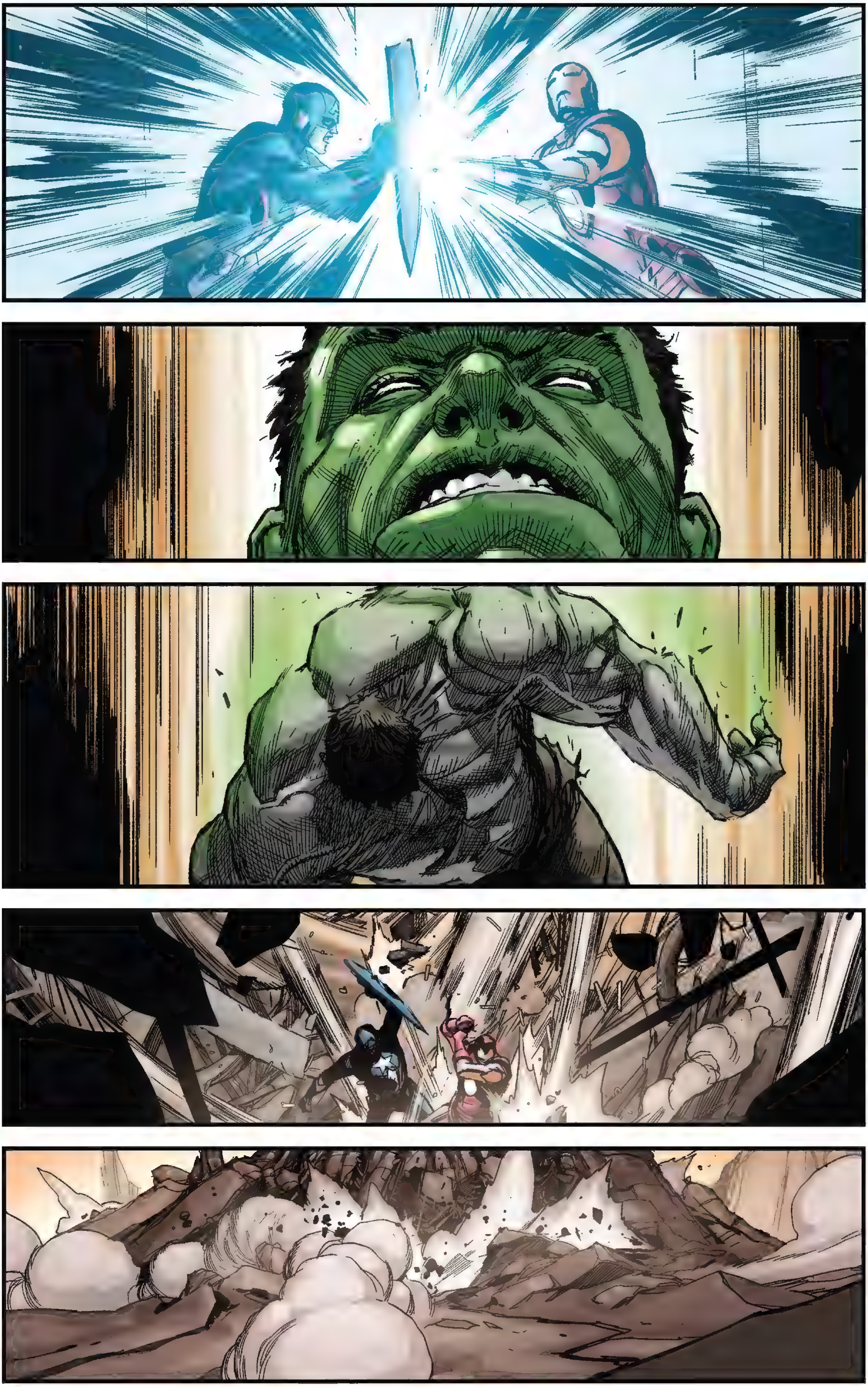

CLINT, COME ON--SNAP OUT OF IT--
HE WAS RIGHT, BOBBI... HE WAS RIGHT ABOUT *ALL* OF IT...
WE DID THIS TO OURSELVES, AND NOW IT'S COMING BACK AROUND. ALL OUR GHOSTS. EVERYTHING WE'RE PRETENDING DIDN'T HAPPEN.
I KILLED HIM...I DID THE ONE THING I SAID I'D NEVER DO--AND I DID IT TO MY *FRIEND.* WHAT DOES THAT MAKE *ME?*
WE *DESERVE* THIS.
YEAH... YOU KNOW WHAT, CLINT? MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT. MAYBE WE DO--
--BUT DO *THEY?!*
AND IN THAT MOMENT OF REPRIEVE--
*HEAD FOR THE SOUTH EXITS!*
--WE BEGAN TO REMEMBER.

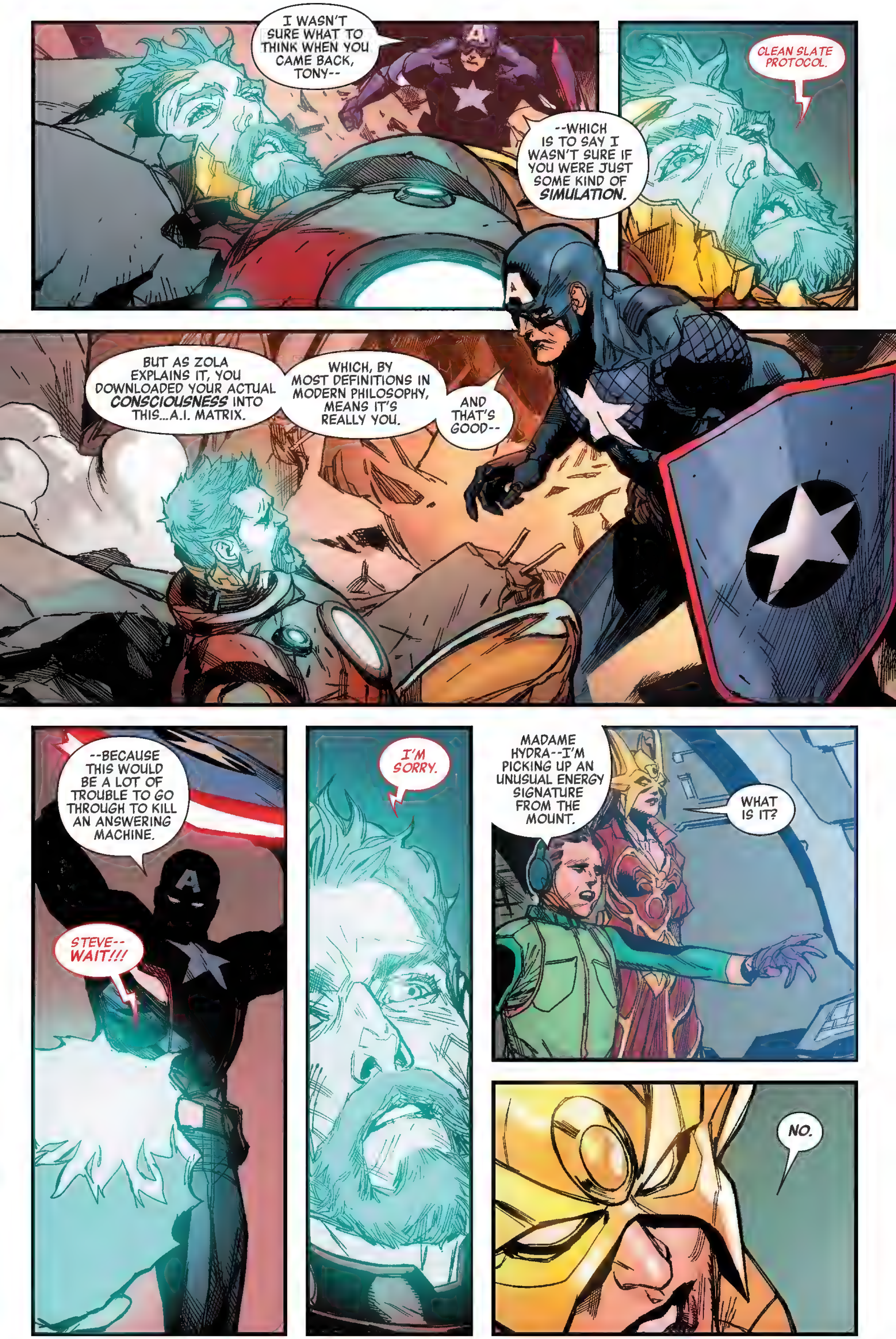

BEGAN TO REMEMBER HOW TO STAND AGAIN.
UH, RAZ-- WHERE ARE WE GOING? THEY SAID SOUTH EXITS--
I EVER TELL YOU MY SUPER HERO SECRET ORIGIN, RAYSHAUN? I WAS A GRAD STUDENT, STUDYING A.I.--WORKING PART-TIME IN TECH SUPPORT.
THIS BAD GUY, EGGHEAD-- HE BRAINWASHED ME, MADE ME HELP HIM ACTIVATE THIS WHOLE TEAM OF ANDROID AVENGERS HE'D STOLEN FROM HANK PYM.
SOUNDS LIKE AN ASS.
OH, HE WAS--
REMEMBERED THE EVIL WE STOOD AGAINST.
--BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN HE DIDN'T HAVE SOME GOOD IDEAS.
REMEMBERED WHO WE FOUGHT FOR.

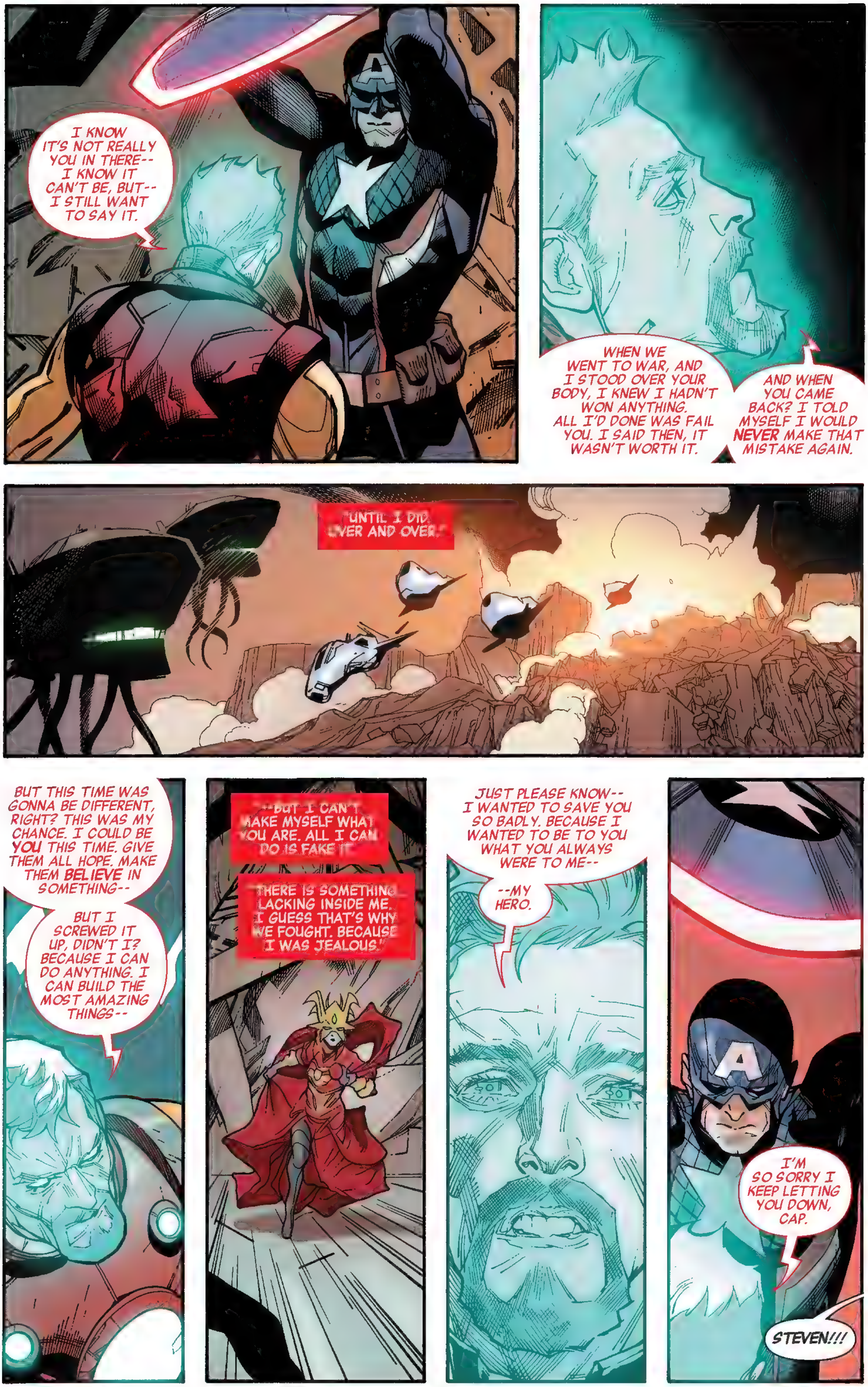

GET TO THE JETS! COME ON, MOVE! WE'RE ALMOST--
--THERE.
GO.
MOVE, PEOPLE, MOVE! NOW! HURRY!
WE NEED TO GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE--
NO ARGUMENT FROM ME. GOT MOST EVERYONE ACCOUNTED FOR, SOMEHOW--

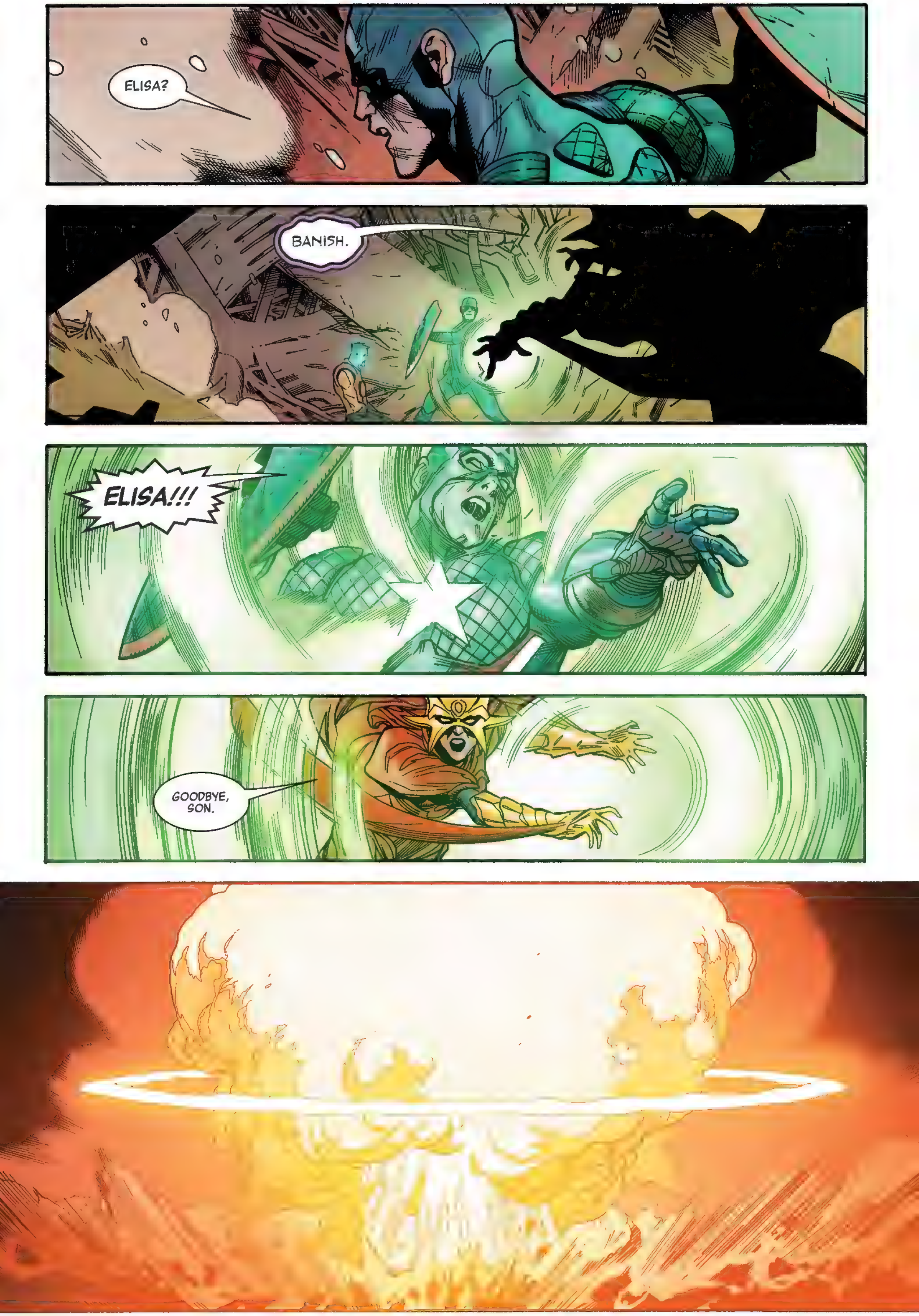

"--EXCEPT TONY."
CLANG
YOU'RE TOO LATE, TONY. I ALREADY HAVE YOUR FRAGMENTS--
--AND NOW YOU HAVE SOMETHING FROM ME IN RETURN.
IT'S BASED ON ULTRON'S TECH. KEEPS YOU IN ONE PLACE FOR A WHILE. MAKES YOU TANGIBLE. VULNERABLE TO--
ATTACKS?

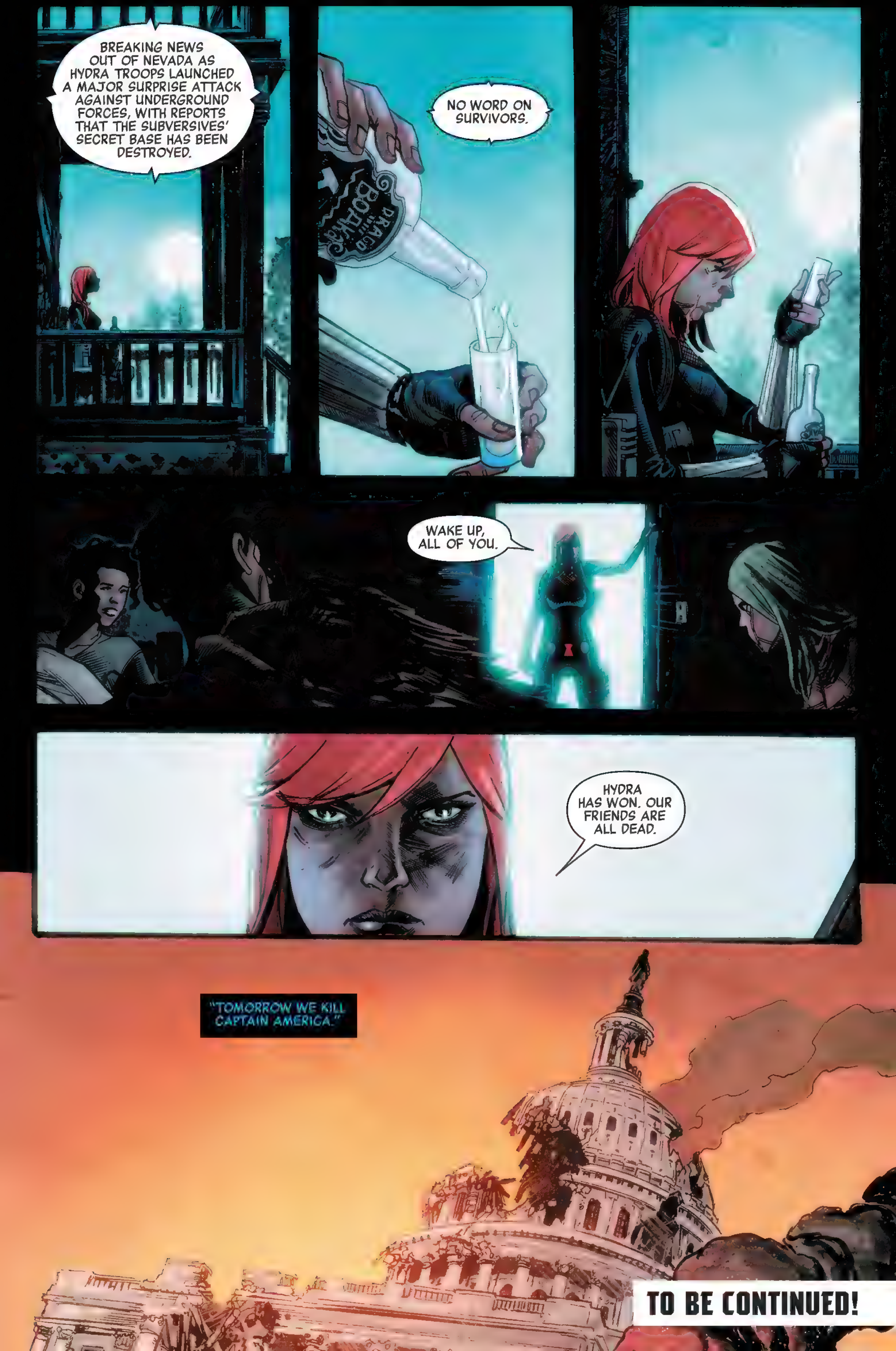





I WASN'T SURE WHAT TO THINK WHEN YOU CAME BACK, TONY--
--WHICH IS TO SAY I WASN'T SURE IF YOU WERE JUST SOME KIND OF SIMULATION.
CLEAN SLATE PROTOCOL.
BUT AS ZOLA EXPLAINS IT, YOU DOWNLOADED YOUR ACTUAL CONSCIOUSNESS INTO THIS...A.I. MATRIX.
WHICH, BY MOST DEFINITIONS IN MODERN PHILOSOPHY, MEANS IT'S REALLY YOU.
AND THAT'S GOOD--
--BECAUSE THIS WOULD BE A LOT OF TROUBLE TO GO THROUGH TO KILL AN ANSWERING MACHINE.
STEVE--WAIT!!!
I'M SORRY.
MADAME HYDRA--I'M PICKING UP AN UNUSUAL ENERGY SIGNATURE FROM THE MOUNT.
WHAT IS IT?
NO.


I KNOW IT'S NOT REALLY YOU IN THERE-- I KNOW IT CAN'T BE, BUT-- I STILL WANT TO SAY IT.
WHEN WE WENT TO WAR, AND I STOOD OVER YOUR BODY, I KNEW I HADN'T WON ANYTHING. ALL I'D DONE WAS FAIL YOU. I SAID THEN, IT WASN'T WORTH IT.
AND WHEN YOU CAME BACK? I TOLD MYSELF I WOULD NEVER MAKE THAT MISTAKE AGAIN.
"UNTIL I DID. OVER AND OVER."
BUT THIS TIME WAS GONNA BE DIFFERENT, RIGHT? THIS WAS MY CHANCE. I COULD BE YOU THIS TIME. GIVE THEM ALL HOPE. MAKE THEM BELIEVE IN SOMETHING--
BUT I SCREWED IT UP, DIDN'T I? BECAUSE I CAN DO ANYTHING. I CAN BUILD THE MOST AMAZING THINGS--
"--BUT I CAN'T MAKE MYSELF WHAT YOU ARE. ALL I CAN DO IS FAKE IT.
"THERE IS SOMETHING LACKING INSIDE ME. I GUESS THAT'S WHY WE FOUGHT. BECAUSE I WAS JEALOUS."
JUST PLEASE KNOW-- I WANTED TO SAVE YOU SO BADLY. BECAUSE I WANTED TO BE TO YOU WHAT YOU ALWAYS WERE TO ME--
--MY HERO.
I'M SO SORRY I KEEP LETTING YOU DOWN, CAP.
STEVEN!!!


ELISA?
BANISH.
ELISA!!!
GOODBYE, SON.


BREAKING NEWS OUT OF NEVADA AS HYDRA TROOPS LAUNCHED A MAJOR SURPRISE ATTACK AGAINST UNDERGROUND FORCES, WITH REPORTS THAT THE SUBVERSIVES' SECRET BASE HAS BEEN DESTROYED.
NO WORD ON SURVIVORS.
WAKE UP, ALL OF YOU.
HYDRA HAS WON. OUR FRIENDS ARE ALL DEAD.
"TOMORROW WE KILL CAPTAIN AMERICA."
TO BE CONTINUED!

# Secret Empire

## July

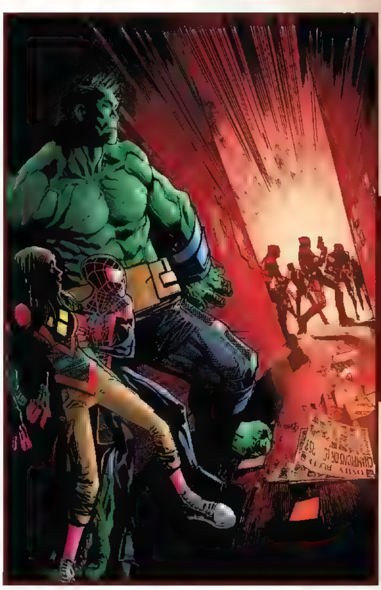
### X-Men Gold #7 & #8

The X-Mansion was one of the few safe places in the Darkforce --until they let X-Cutioner in!

### X-Men Blue #7 & #8

Emma Frost is back and badder than ever.

### Champions #10



The Champions storm an Inhuman holding camp searching for their missing teammate.

## Beyond the Shield

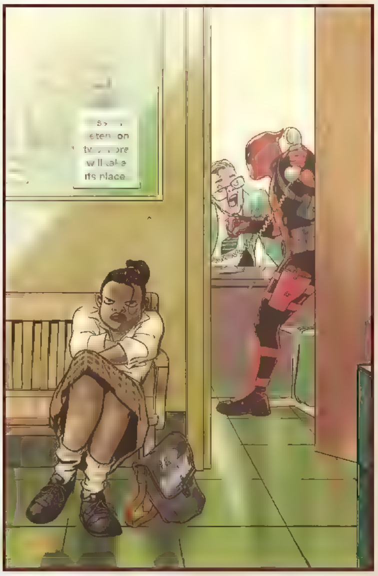
### The Mighty Captain Marvel #7

Can Captain Marvel's forces hold out against the Chitauri?

### Secret Warriors #4

Quake struggles to keep her team together long enough to confront Mister Hyde!

### Deadpool #33 & #34

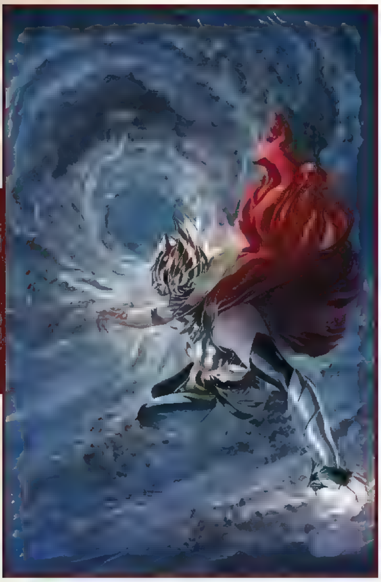


Deadpool threw in with Hydra --what does that mean for his relationship with his daughter?

# Secret Empire

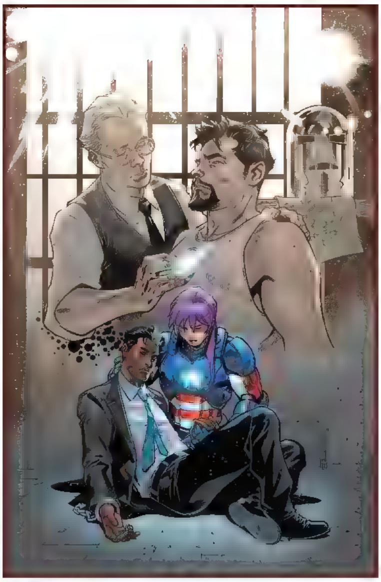
## July

### Avengers #9



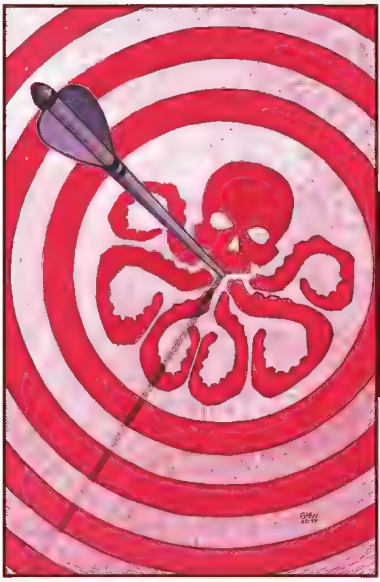
What happened to Thor after Captain America stole her hammer?

### U.S.Avengers #8



Toni Ho's father died saving Tony Stark's life--will Toni do the same for a dying Roberto Da Costa?

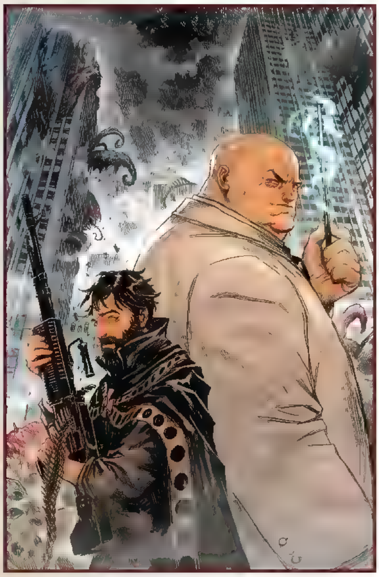
### Occupy Avengers #9



Hawkeye's team makes a final stand to protect a group of farmers from Hydra.

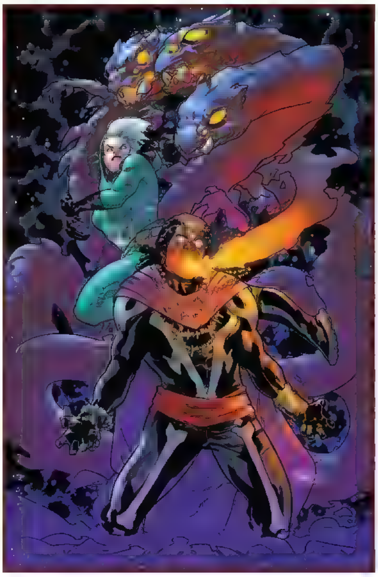
## Darkforce New York

### Doctor Strange #23



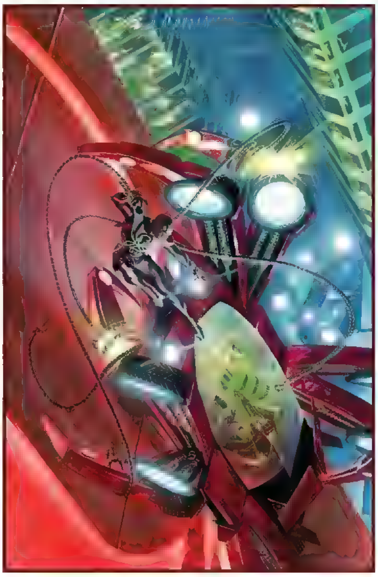
Doctor Strange and Wilson Fisk team up to take down Baron Mordo!

### Uncanny Avengers #25



The Unity Squad faces darkness without and within as the Darkforce assaults New York!

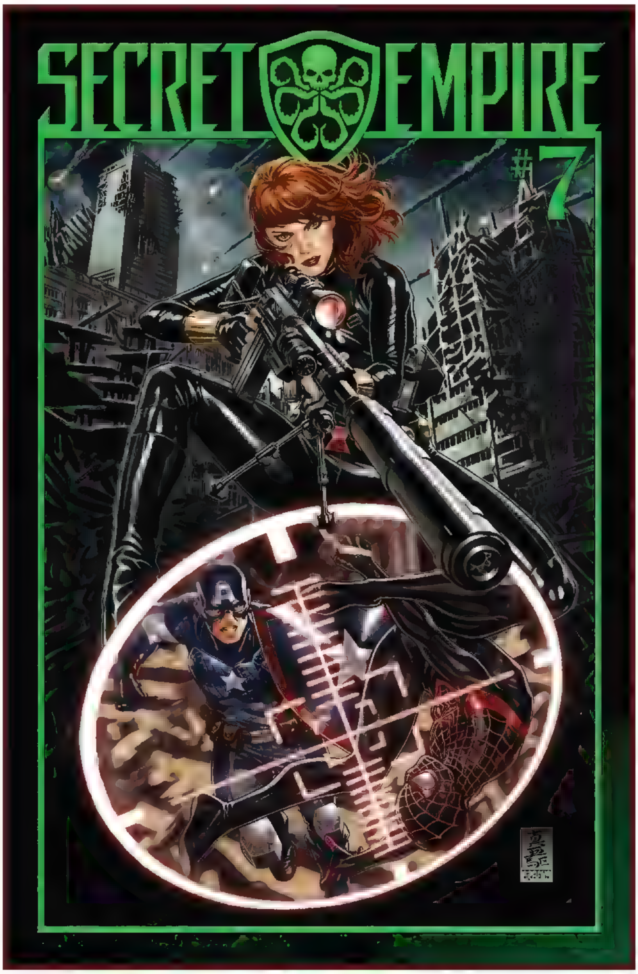
### Amazing Spider-Man #30



Otto Octavius is back--and he's working with Hydra!

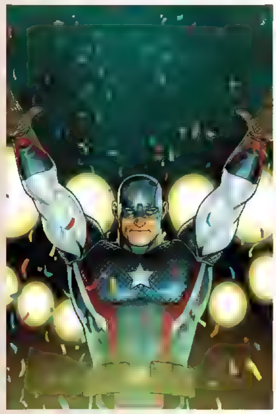
# SECRET EMPIRE

## NEXT



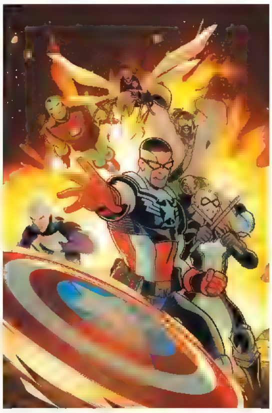
IT WAS FORETOLD BY ULYSSES, IT'S HAUNTED SPIDER-MAN'S NIGHTMARES FOR MONTHS, AND NOW THE MOMENT HAS ARRIVED: IT'S TIME FOR MILES MORALES TO KILL CAPTAIN AMERICA...OR IS IT?

### CAPTAIN AMERICA: STEVE ROGERS #19



A TRAUMATIC BETRAYAL PUSHES CAPTAIN AMERICA FURTHER INTO DARKNESS.*

### CAPTAIN AMERICA: SAM WILSON #24



IN THE UNDERGROUND'S DARKEST MOMENT, CAN SAM TAKE UP THE SHIELD AND LEAD THEM TO VICTORY?

### SECRET EMPIRE: BRAVE NEW WORLD #3 & #4

THERE'S A TRAITOR IN ATLANTIS --AND IT MIGHT COST NAMOR HIS TRUCE WITH HYDRA.

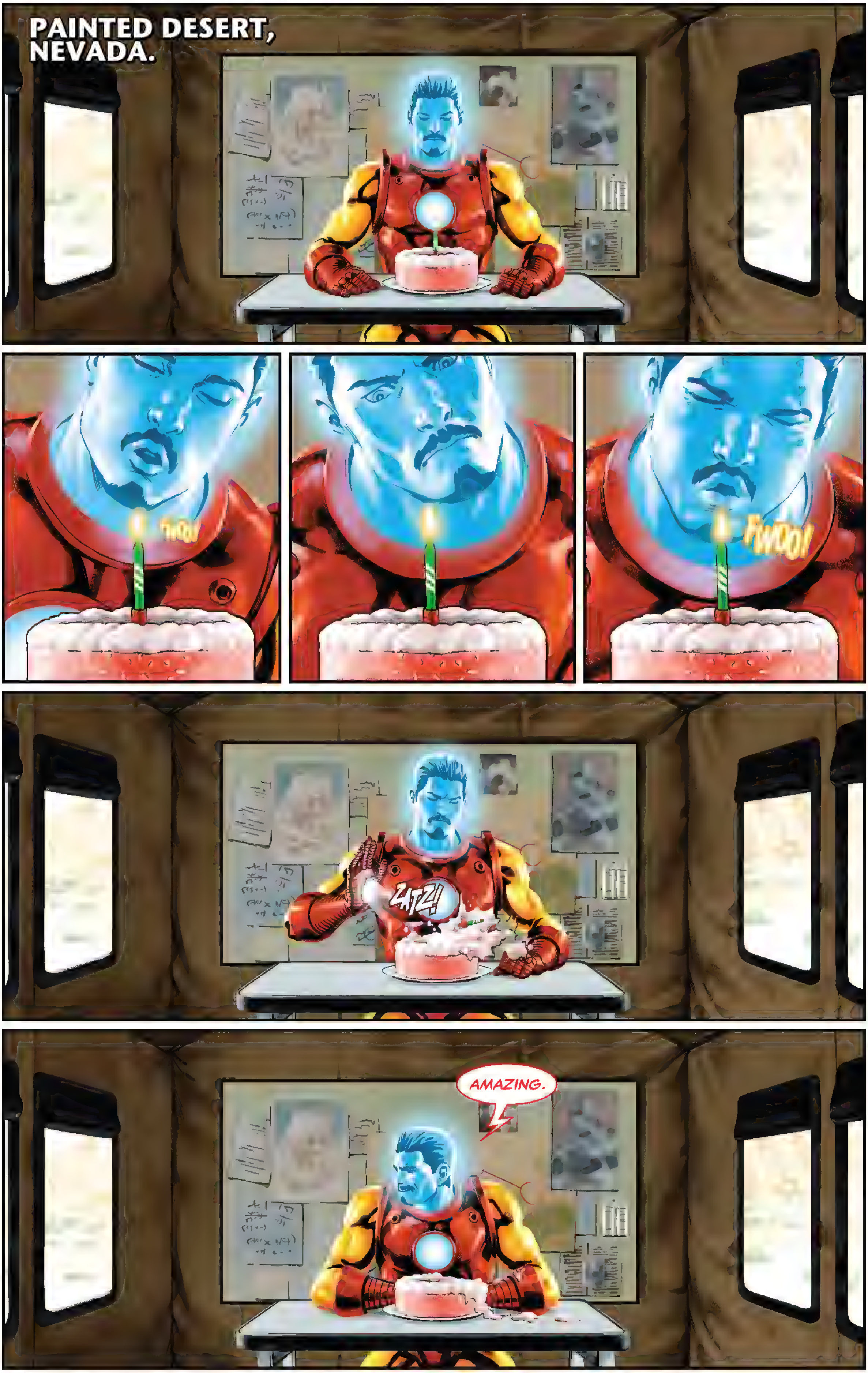
*READ BOTH ISSUES OF CAPTAIN AMERICA AFTER READING SECRET EMPIRE #7.

# CAPTAIN AMERICA®

MARVEL

#25

SPENCER
SAIZ
BENNETT
PIMENTEL
ROSENBERG


PAINTED DESERT, NEVADA.
FWOO!
FWOO!
ZATZ!
AMAZING.

TWO HEROES. ONE MANTLE. NO QUARTER.

# CAPTAIN AMERICA

**WARNING! Read this issue BEFORE SECRET EMPIRE #8**

A Cosmic Cube transformed Steve Rogers, Captain America, into the ultimate Hydra sleeper agent--and he used a moment of international crisis to claim the country for Hydra. Earth's strongest heroes are trapped in Darkforce-enshrouded Manhattan or beyond the planetary defense shield. Inhumans are imprisoned in holding camps, and mutants have been exiled to a territory called New Tian.

Sam Wilson walked away from the Captain America mantle before Steve Rogers' true colors were revealed, and he's tried to make up for that by joining the anti-Hydra resistance. But with their base destroyed, their allies dying and their Cosmic Cube fragments lost to Steve Rogers, the Underground is ready to give up the fight.

It's time for Captain America to make a stand...

NICK SPENCER ★ WRITER JESUS SAIZ WITH JOE BENNETT & JOE PIMENTEL ★ ARTISTS
RACHELLE ROSENBERG ★ COLOR ARTIST VC'S JOE CARAMAGNA ★ LETTERING JESUS SAIZ ★ COVER ARTIST
JACK KIRBY AND PAUL MOUNTS WITH JOE FRONTIRRE; JIM STERANKO ★ VARIANT COVERS
CARLOS LAO ★ PRODUCTION DESIGN ALANNA SMITH ★ ASSISTANT EDITOR TOM BREVOORT ★ EDITOR
AXEL ALONSO ★ EDITOR IN CHIEF JOE QUESADA ★ CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER DAN BUCKLEY ★ PRESIDENT ALAN FINE ★ EXECUTIVE PRODUCER
Captain America created by Joe Simon & Jack Kirby

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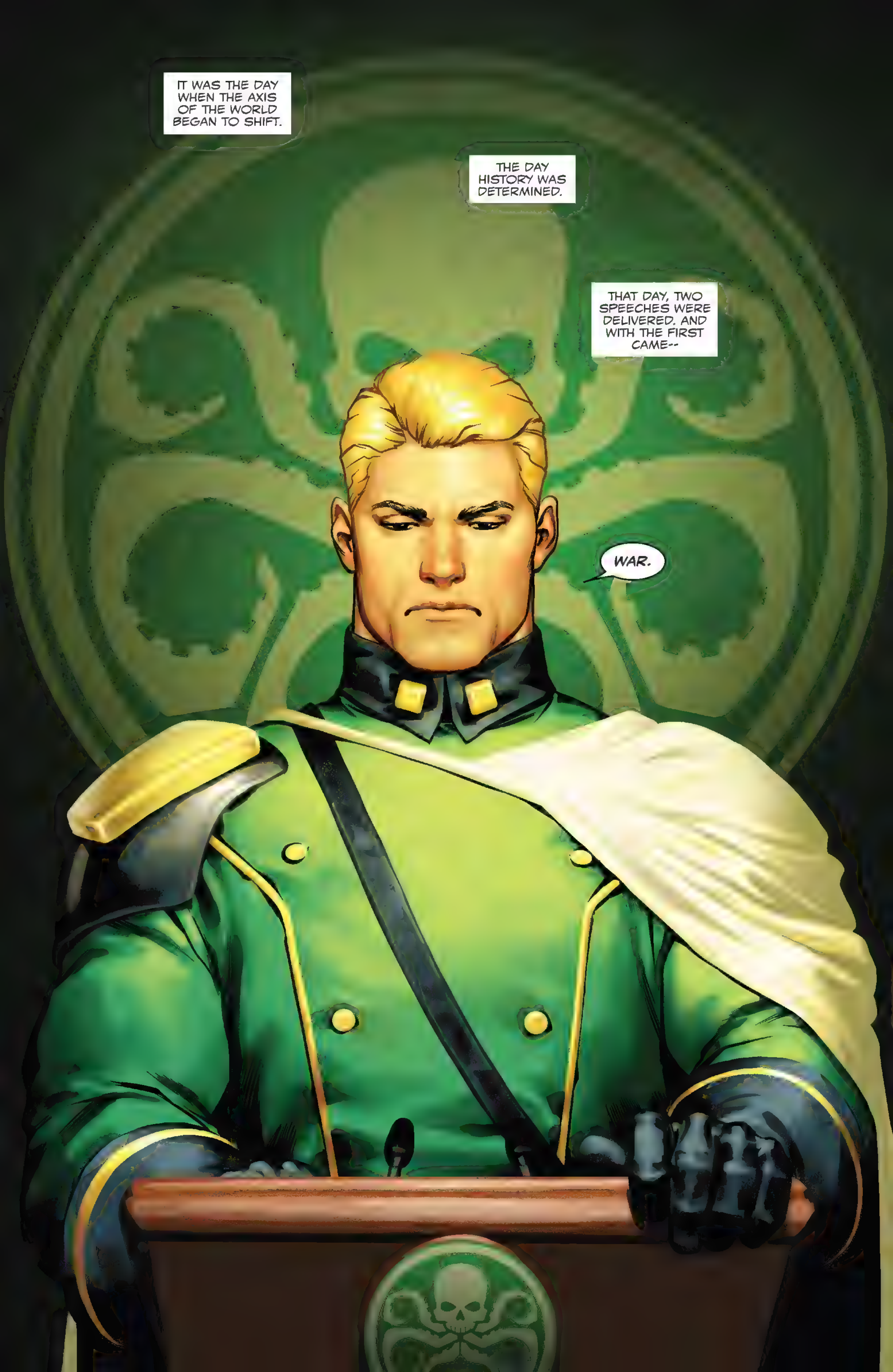
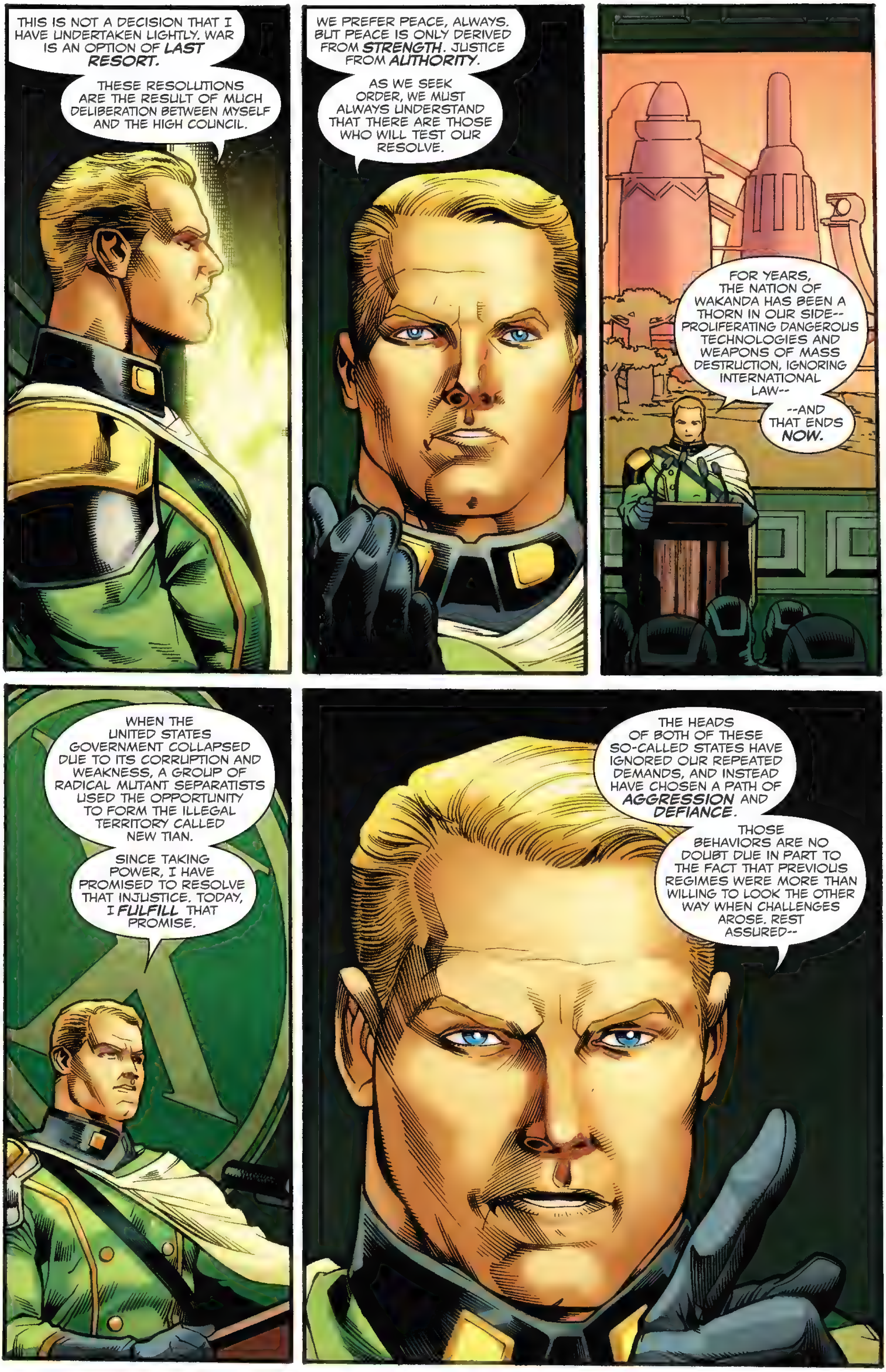
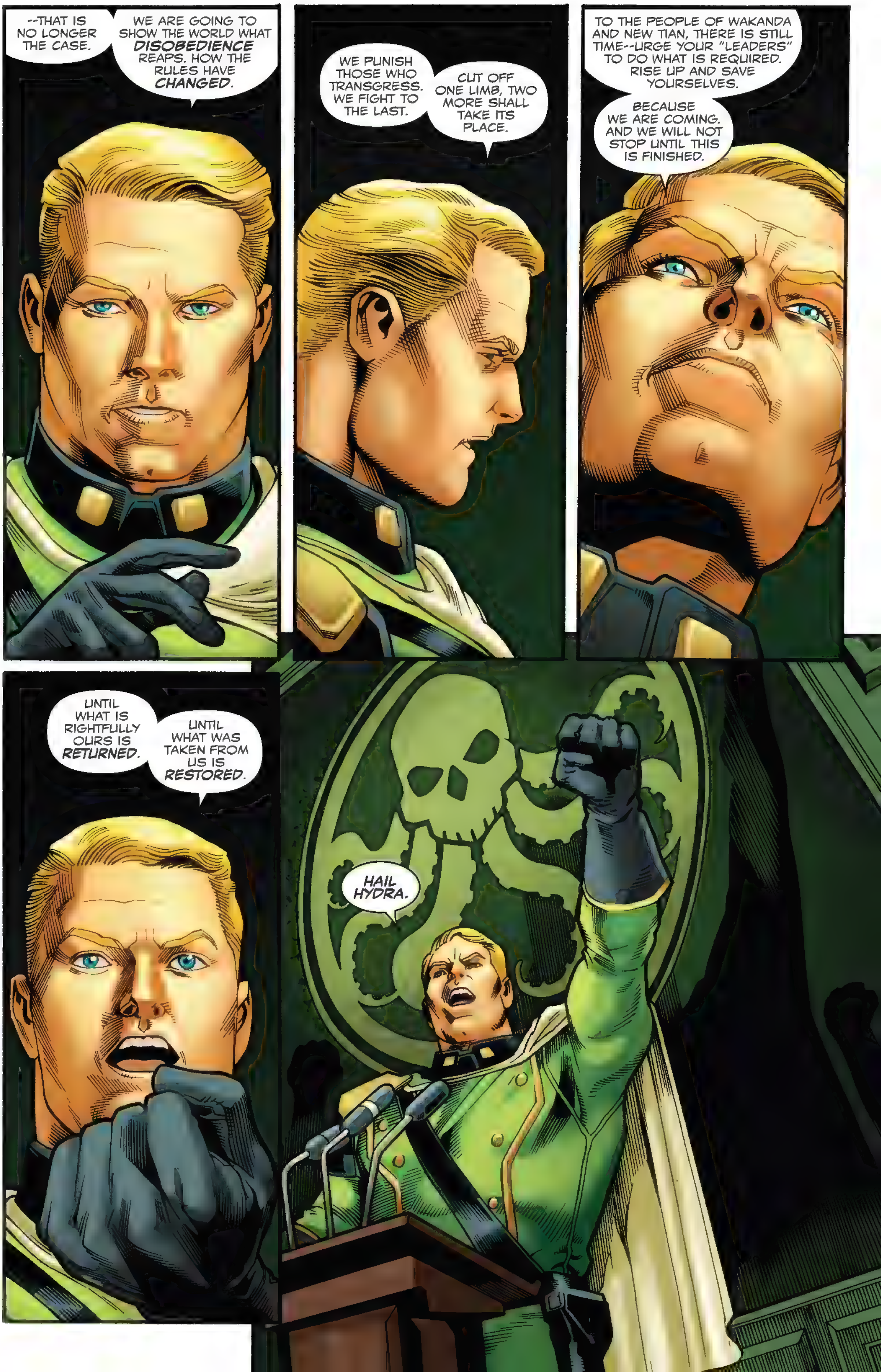
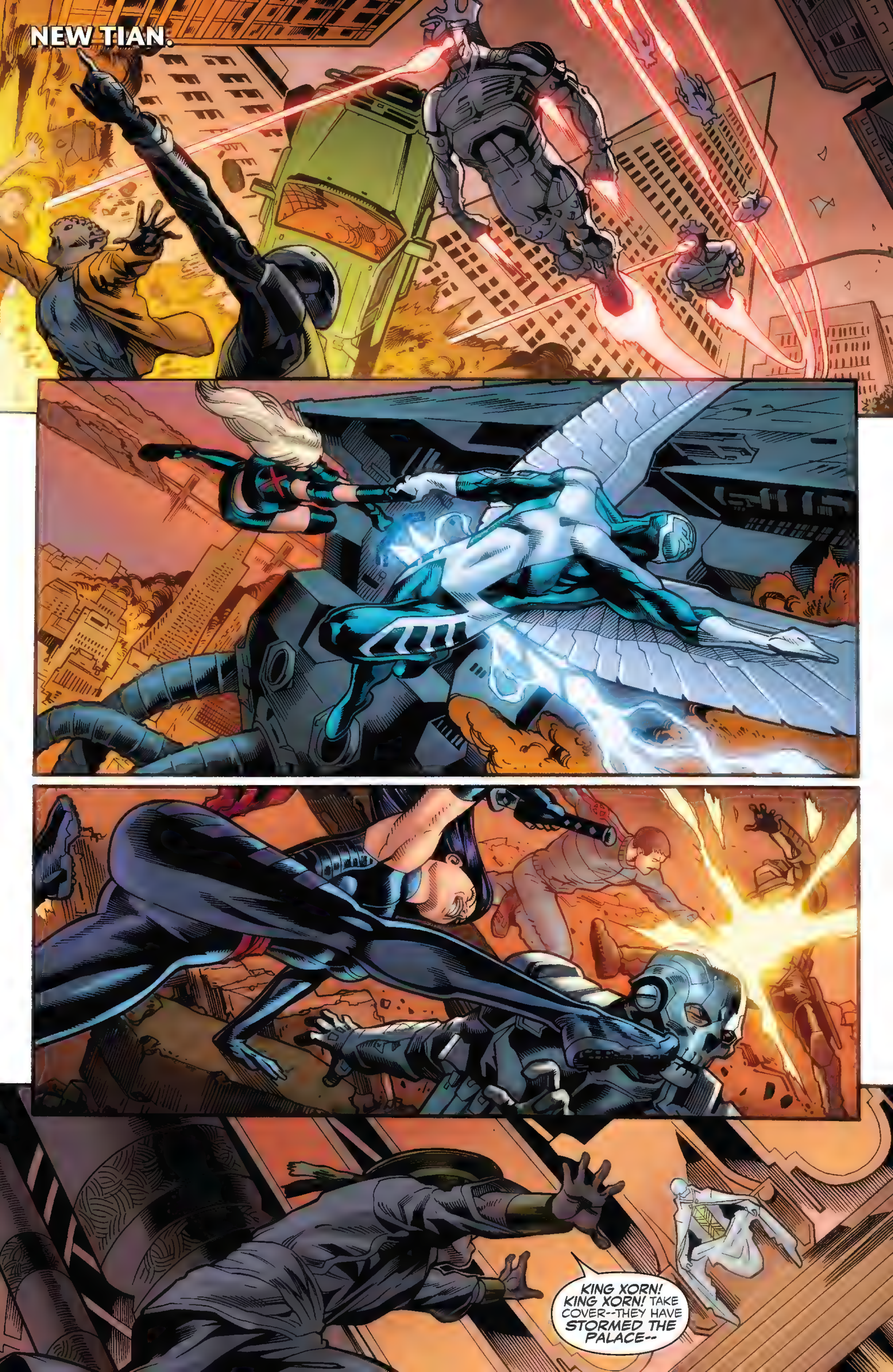
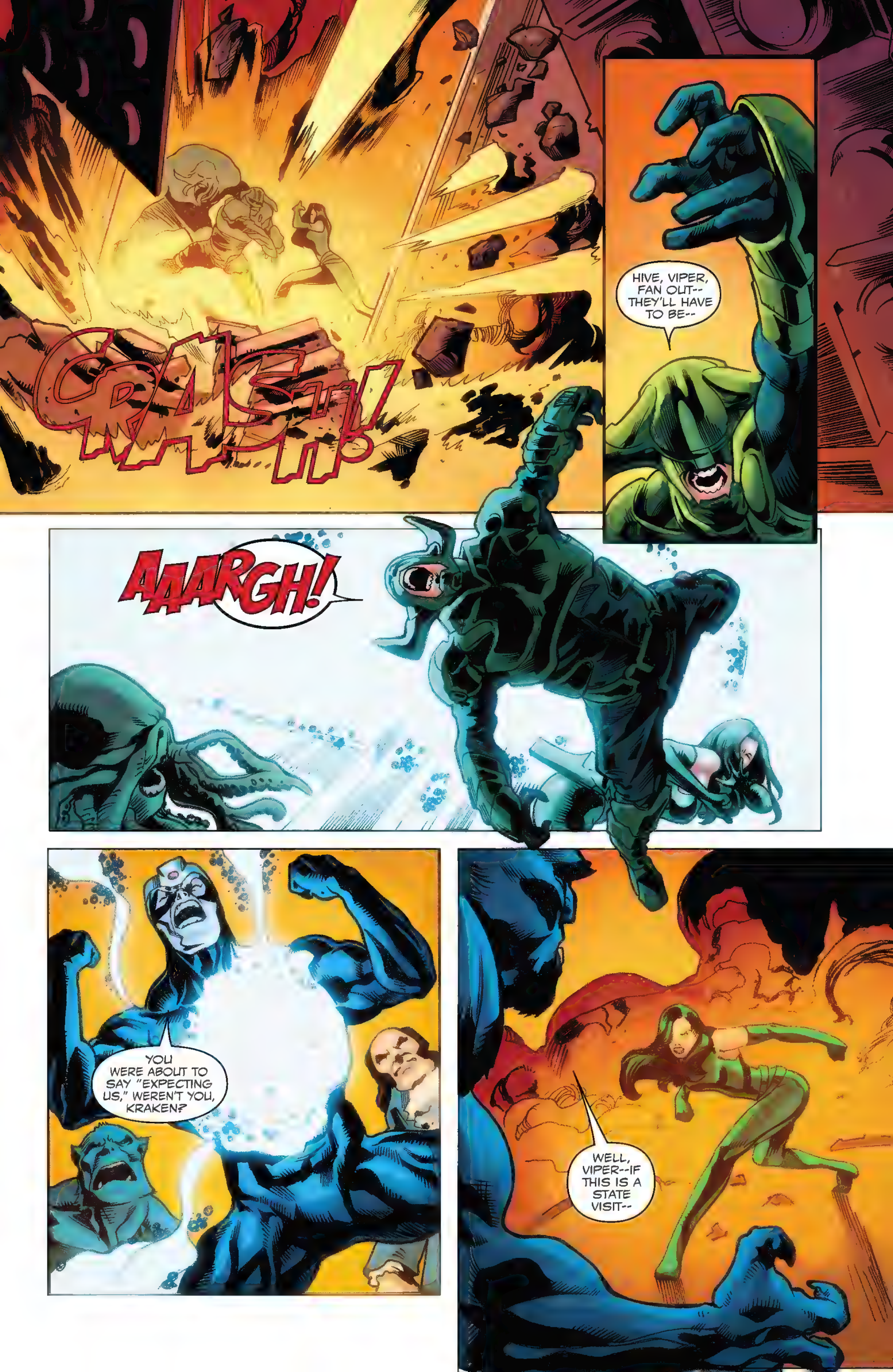
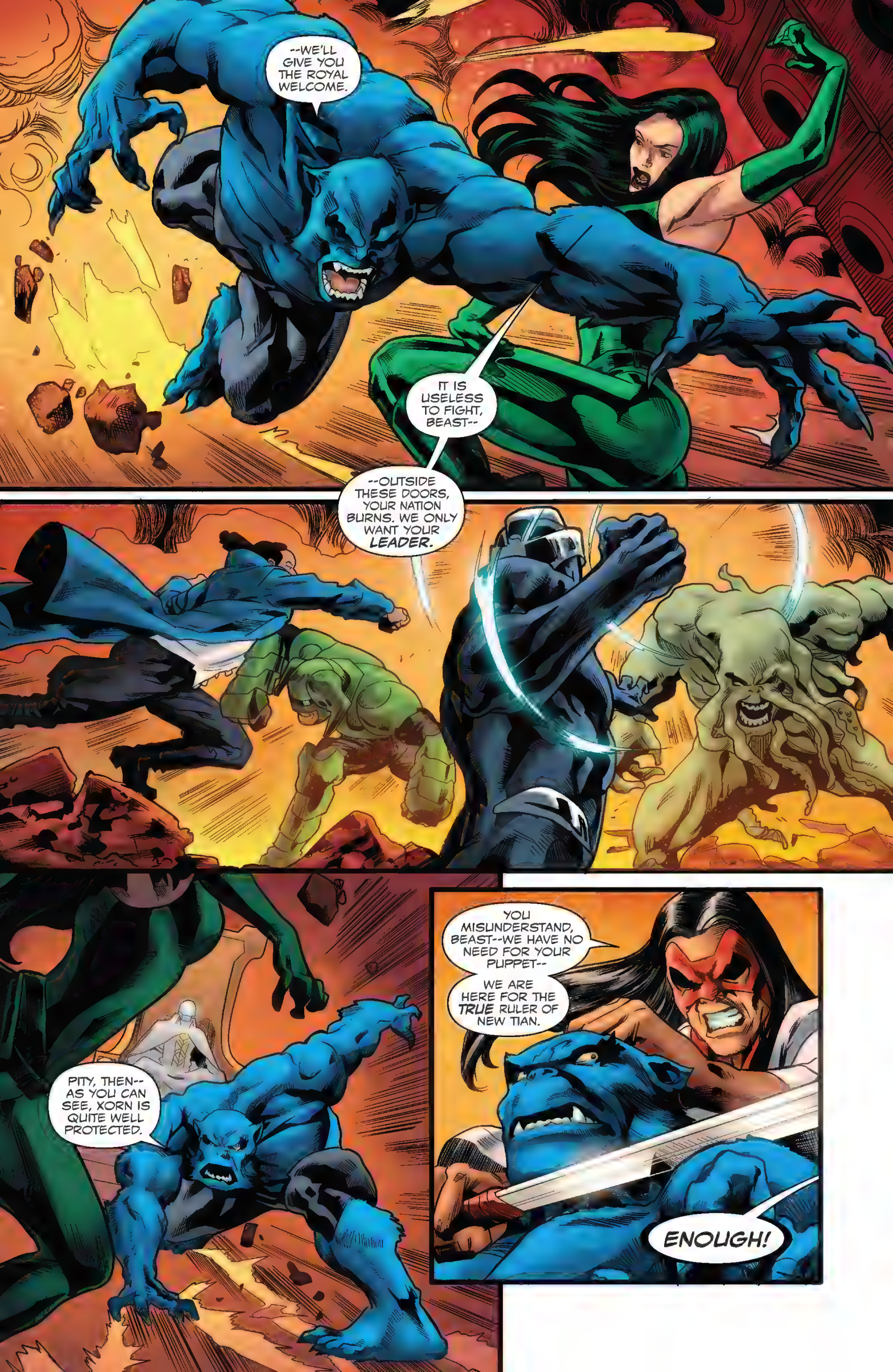

IT WAS THE DAY WHEN THE AXIS OF THE WORLD BEGAN TO SHIFT.
THE DAY HISTORY WAS DETERMINED.
THAT DAY, TWO SPEECHES WERE DELIVERED. AND WITH THE FIRST CAME--
WAR.

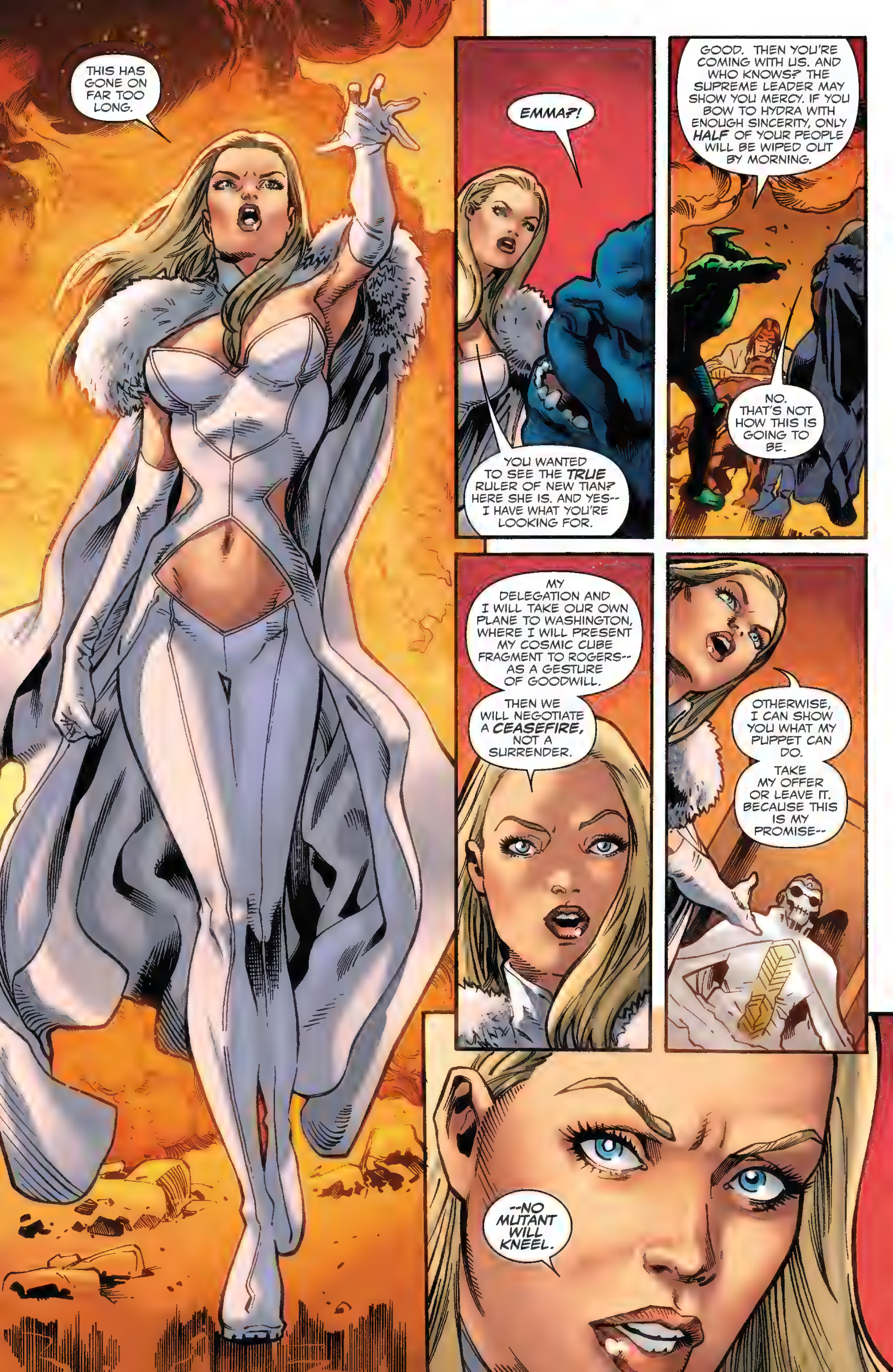

THIS IS NOT A DECISION THAT I HAVE UNDERTAKEN LIGHTLY. WAR IS AN OPTION OF *LAST RESORT.*
THESE RESOLUTIONS ARE THE RESULT OF MUCH DELIBERATION BETWEEN MYSELF AND THE HIGH COUNCIL.
WE PREFER PEACE, ALWAYS. BUT PEACE IS ONLY DERIVED FROM ***STRENGTH***. JUSTICE FROM ***AUTHORITY***.
AS WE SEEK ORDER, WE MUST ALWAYS UNDERSTAND THAT THERE ARE THOSE WHO WILL TEST OUR RESOLVE.
FOR YEARS, THE NATION OF WAKANDA HAS BEEN A THORN IN OUR SIDE-- PROLIFERATING DANGEROUS TECHNOLOGIES AND WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION, IGNORING INTERNATIONAL LAW--
--AND THAT ENDS ***NOW.***
WHEN THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT COLLAPSED DUE TO ITS CORRUPTION AND WEAKNESS, A GROUP OF RADICAL MUTANT SEPARATISTS USED THE OPPORTUNITY TO FORM THE ILLEGAL TERRITORY CALLED NEW TIAN.
SINCE TAKING POWER, I HAVE PROMISED TO RESOLVE THAT INJUSTICE. TODAY, I ***FULFILL*** THAT PROMISE.
THE HEADS OF BOTH OF THESE SO-CALLED STATES HAVE IGNORED OUR REPEATED DEMANDS, AND INSTEAD HAVE CHOSEN A PATH OF ***AGGRESSION*** AND ***DEFIANCE***.
THOSE BEHAVIORS ARE NO DOUBT DUE IN PART TO THE FACT THAT PREVIOUS REGIMES WERE MORE THAN WILLING TO LOOK THE OTHER WAY WHEN CHALLENGES AROSE. REST ASSURED--

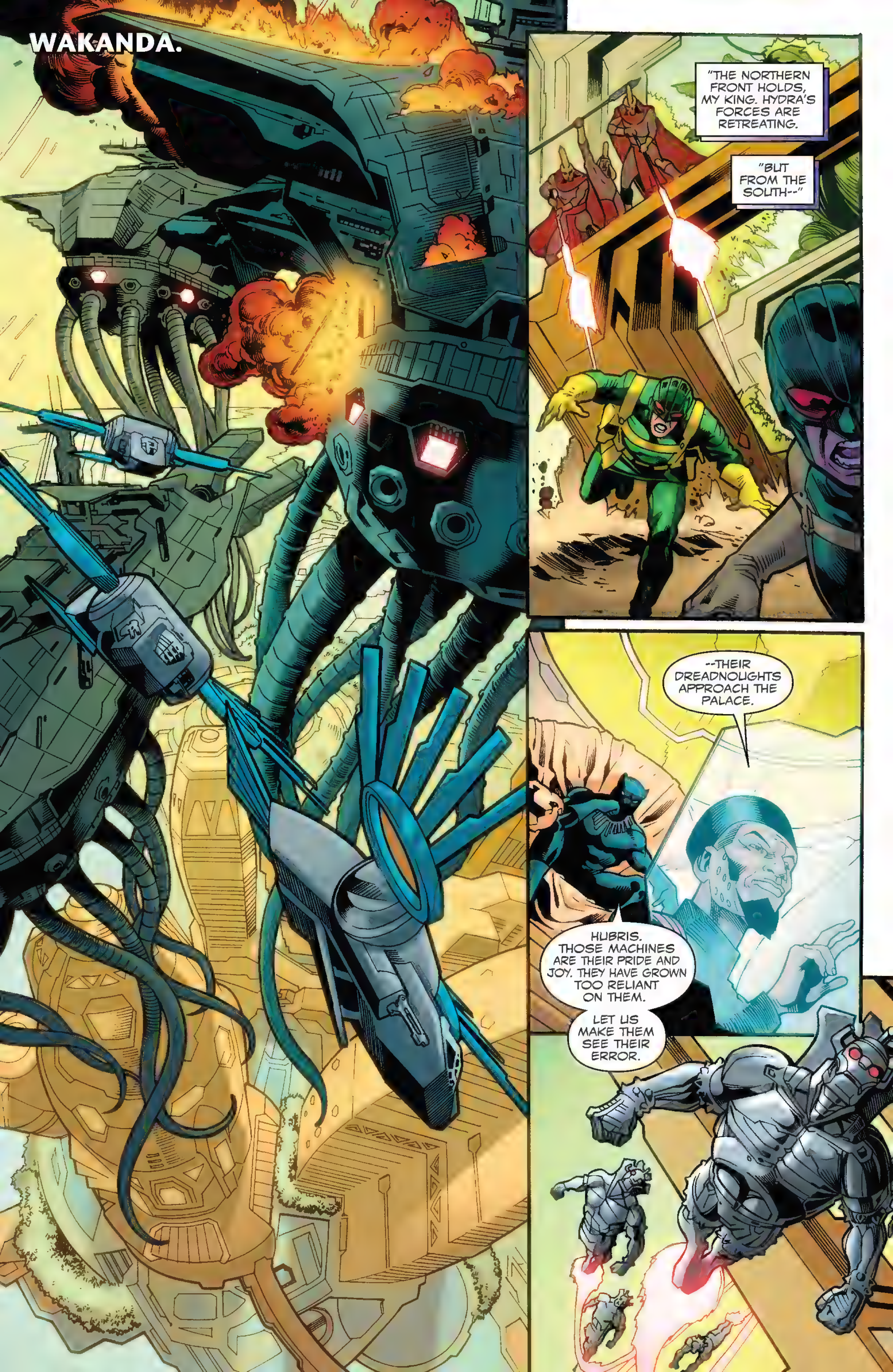

--THAT IS NO LONGER THE CASE.
WE ARE GOING TO SHOW THE WORLD WHAT ***DISOBEDIENCE*** REAPS. HOW THE RULES HAVE ***CHANGED***.
WE PUNISH THOSE WHO TRANSGRESS. WE FIGHT TO THE LAST.
CUT OFF ONE LIMB, TWO MORE SHALL TAKE ITS PLACE.
TO THE PEOPLE OF WAKANDA AND NEW TIAN, THERE IS STILL TIME--URGE YOUR "LEADERS" TO DO WHAT IS REQUIRED. RISE UP AND SAVE YOURSELVES.
BECAUSE WE ARE COMING. AND WE WILL NOT STOP UNTIL THIS IS FINISHED.
UNTIL WHAT IS RIGHTFULLY OURS IS ***RETURNED***.
UNTIL WHAT WAS TAKEN FROM US IS ***RESTORED***.
HAIL HYDRA.

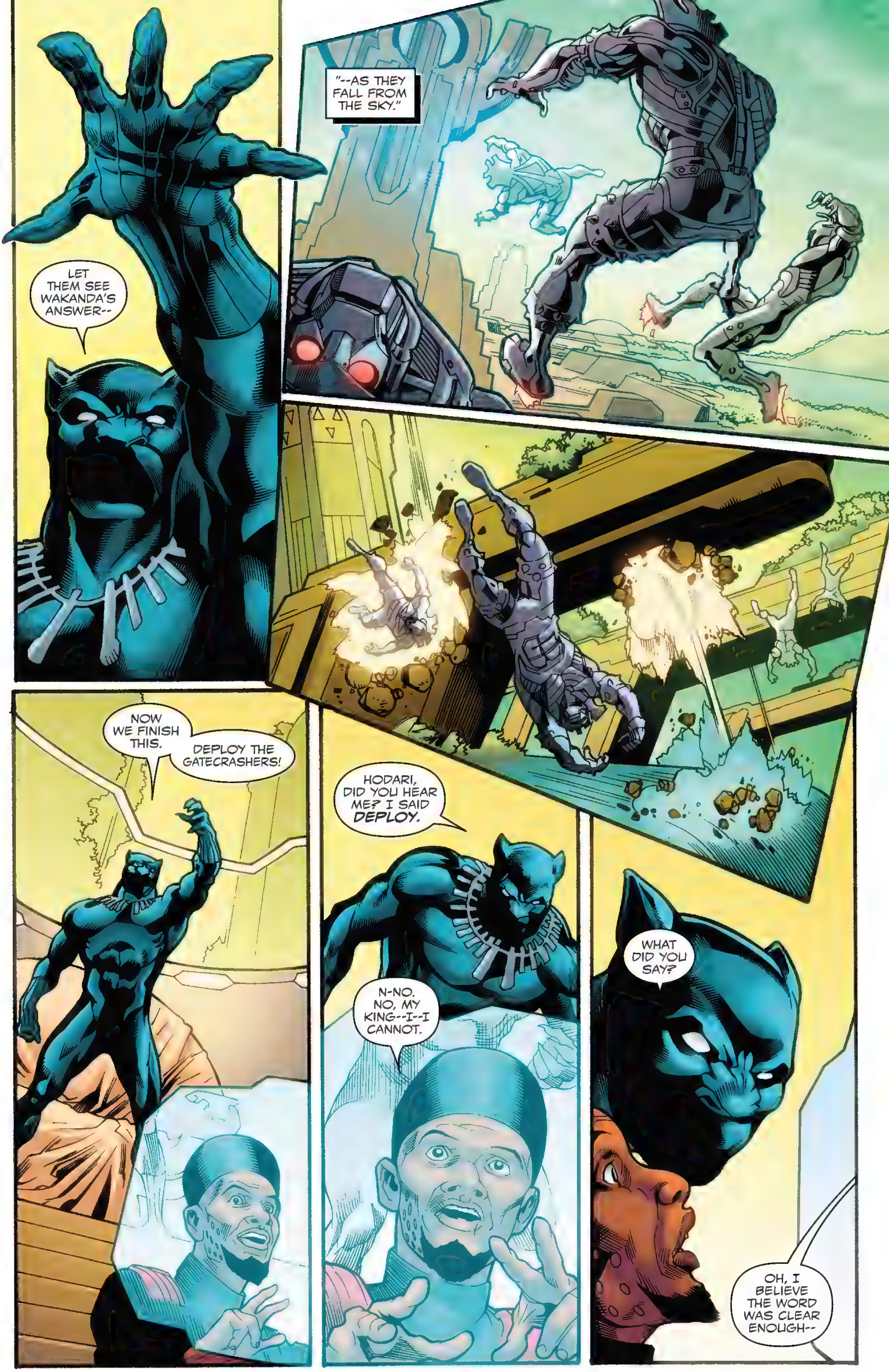

NEW TIAN.
KING XORN! KING XORN! TAKE COVER--THEY HAVE STORMED THE PALACE--

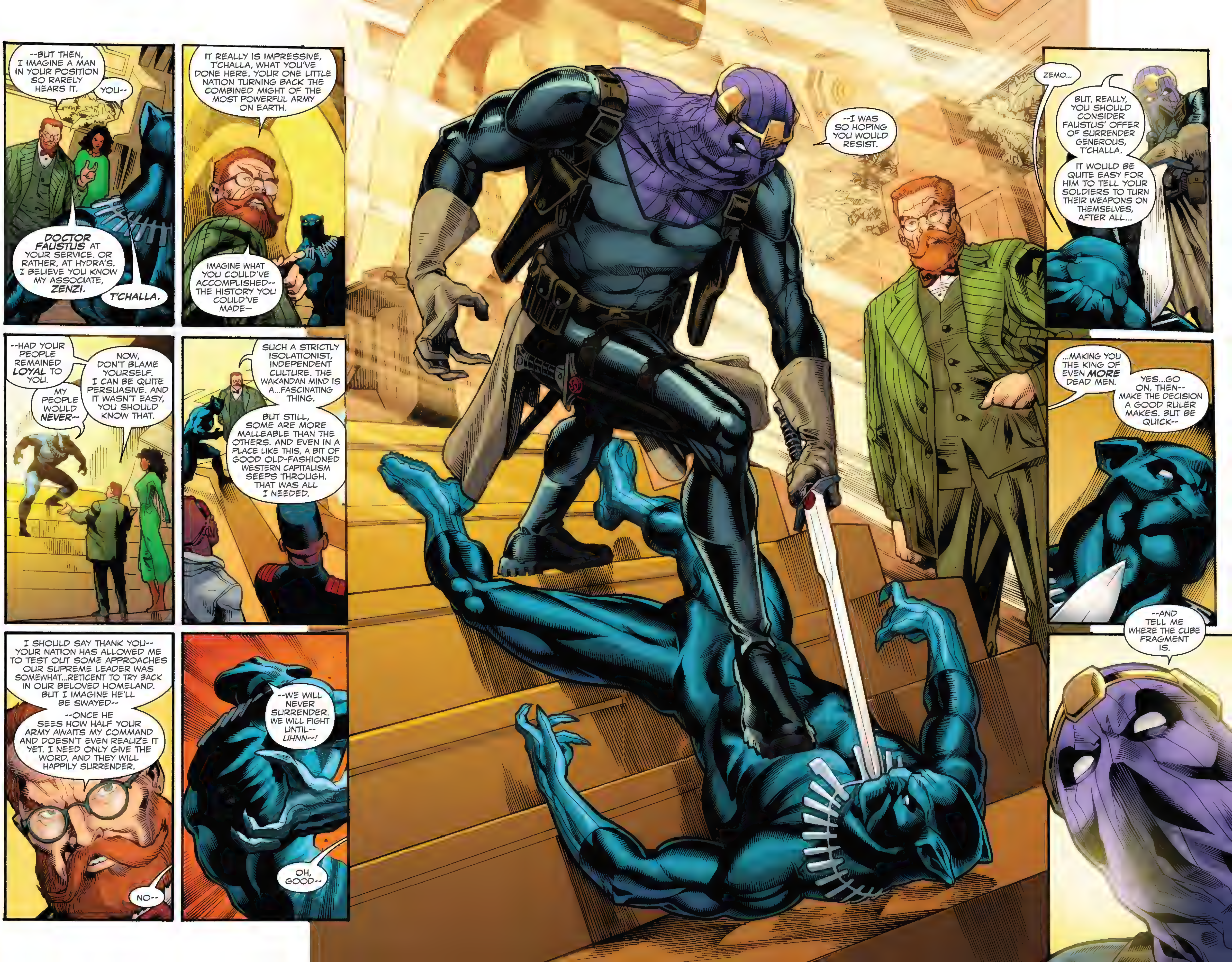

CRASH!
HIVE, VIPER, FAN OUT-- THEY'LL HAVE TO BE--
AAARGH!
YOU WERE ABOUT TO SAY "EXPECTING US," WEREN'T YOU, KRAKEN?
WELL, VIPER--IF THIS IS A STATE VISIT--

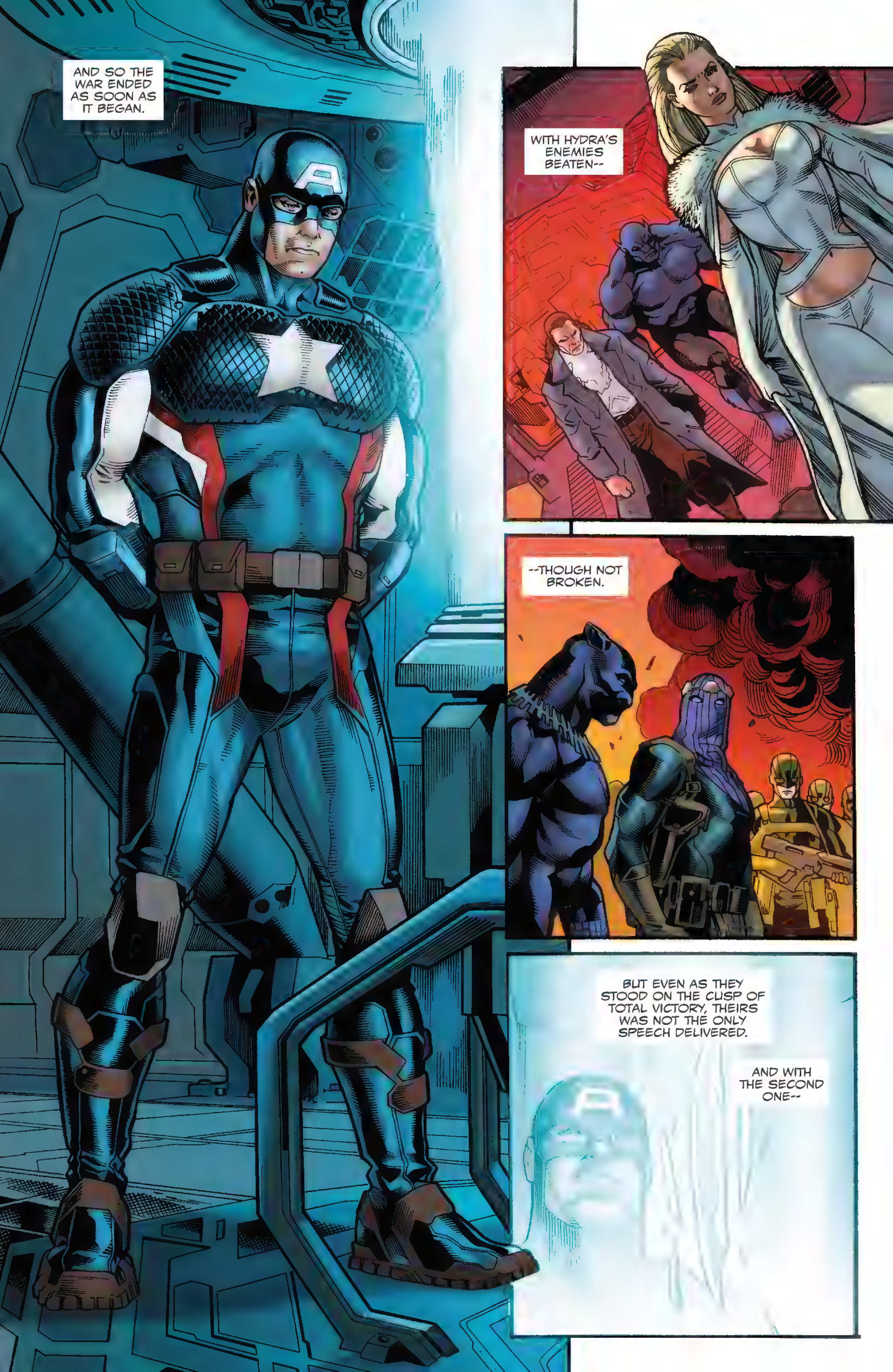

--WE'LL GIVE YOU THE ROYAL WELCOME.
IT IS USELESS TO FIGHT, BEAST--
--OUTSIDE THESE DOORS, YOUR NATION BURNS. WE ONLY WANT YOUR **LEADER.**
PITY, THEN-- AS YOU CAN SEE, XORN IS QUITE WELL PROTECTED.
YOU MISUNDERSTAND, BEAST--WE HAVE NO NEED FOR YOUR PUPPET--
WE ARE HERE FOR THE **TRUE** RULER OF NEW TIAN.
ENOUGH!

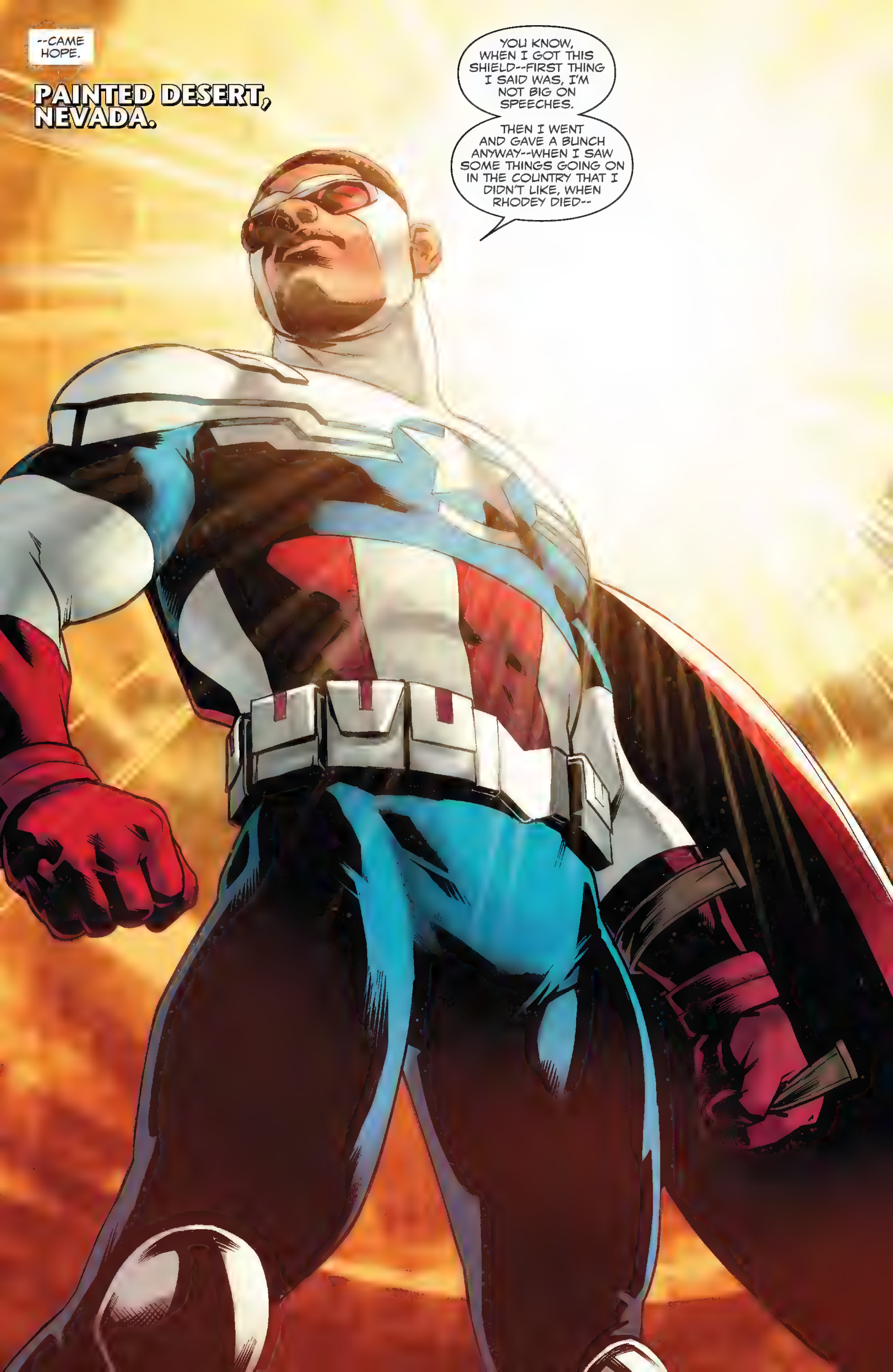

THIS HAS GONE ON FAR TOO LONG.
EMMA?!
YOU WANTED TO SEE THE *TRUE* RULER OF NEW TIAN? HERE SHE IS. AND YES-- I HAVE WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR.
GOOD. THEN YOU'RE COMING WITH US. AND WHO KNOWS? THE SUPREME LEADER MAY SHOW YOU MERCY. IF YOU BOW TO HYDRA WITH ENOUGH SINCERITY, ONLY *HALF* OF YOUR PEOPLE WILL BE WIPED OUT BY MORNING.
NO. THAT'S NOT HOW THIS IS GOING TO BE.
MY DELEGATION AND I WILL TAKE OUR OWN PLANE TO WASHINGTON, WHERE I WILL PRESENT MY COSMIC CUBE FRAGMENT TO ROGERS-- AS A GESTURE OF GOODWILL.
THEN WE WILL NEGOTIATE A *CEASEFIRE,* NOT A SURRENDER.
OTHERWISE, I CAN SHOW YOU WHAT MY PUPPET CAN DO.
TAKE MY OFFER OR LEAVE IT. BECAUSE THIS IS MY PROMISE--
--NO MUTANT WILL KNEEL.

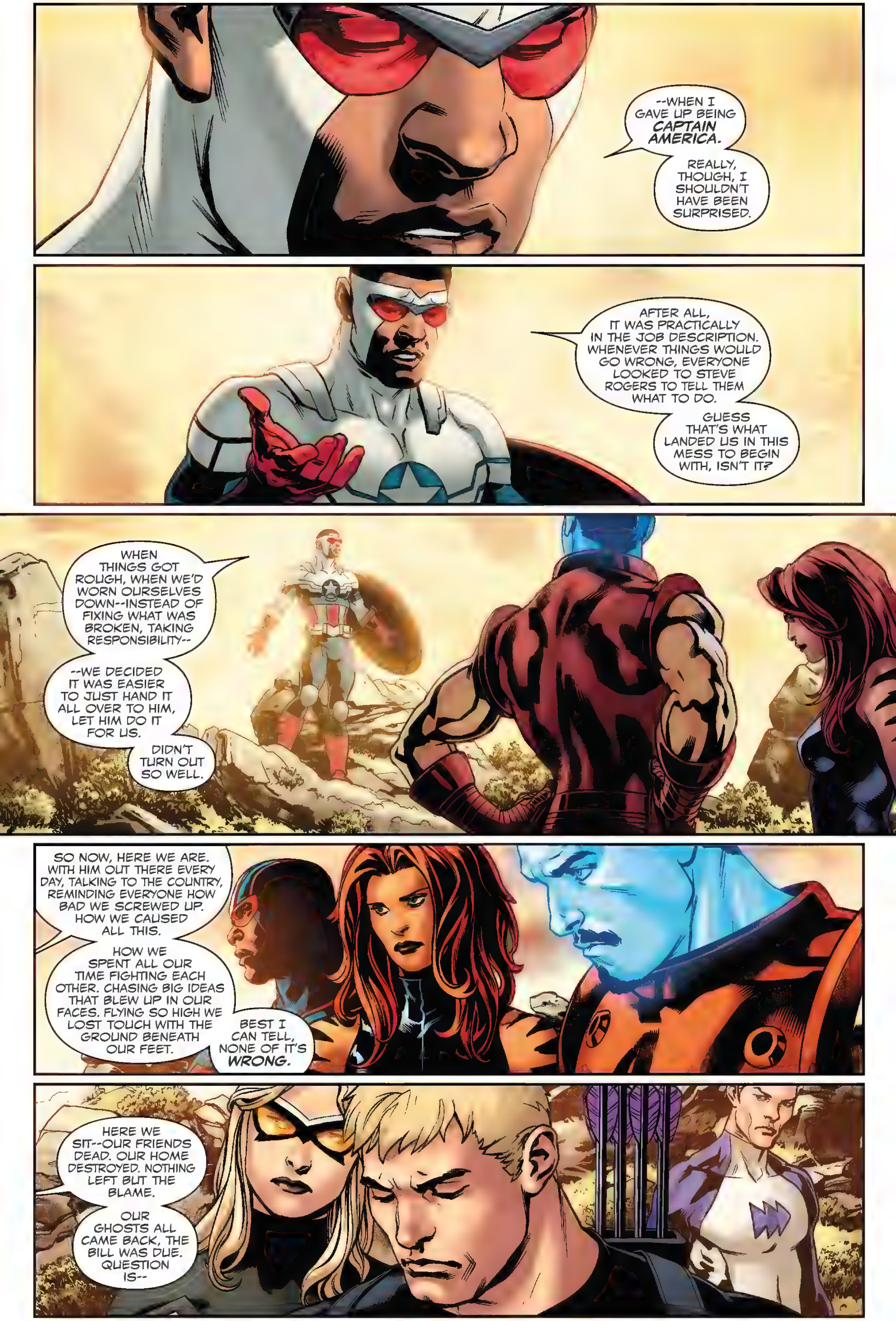

WAKANDA.
"THE NORTHERN FRONT HOLDS, MY KING. HYDRA'S FORCES ARE RETREATING.
"BUT FROM THE SOUTH--"
--THEIR DREADNOUGHTS APPROACH THE PALACE.
HUBRIS. THOSE MACHINES ARE THEIR PRIDE AND JOY. THEY HAVE GROWN TOO RELIANT ON THEM.
LET US MAKE THEM SEE THEIR ERROR.

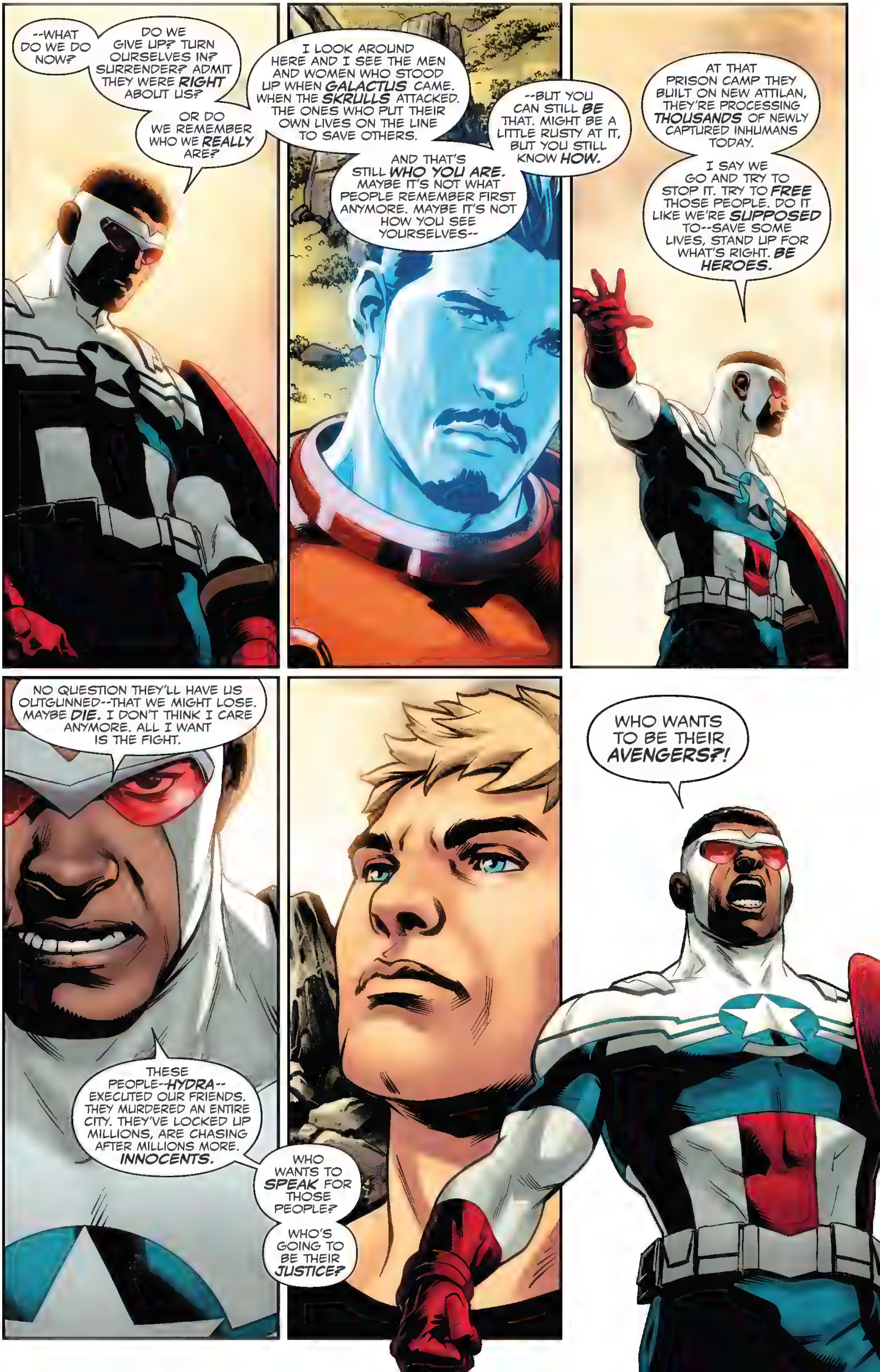

LET THEM SEE WAKANDA'S ANSWER--
"--AS THEY FALL FROM THE SKY."
NOW WE FINISH THIS.
DEPLOY THE GATECRASHERS!
HODARI, DID YOU HEAR ME? I SAID **DEPLOY.**
N-NO. NO, MY KING--I--I CANNOT.
WHAT DID YOU SAY?
OH, I BELIEVE THE WORD WAS CLEAR ENOUGH--

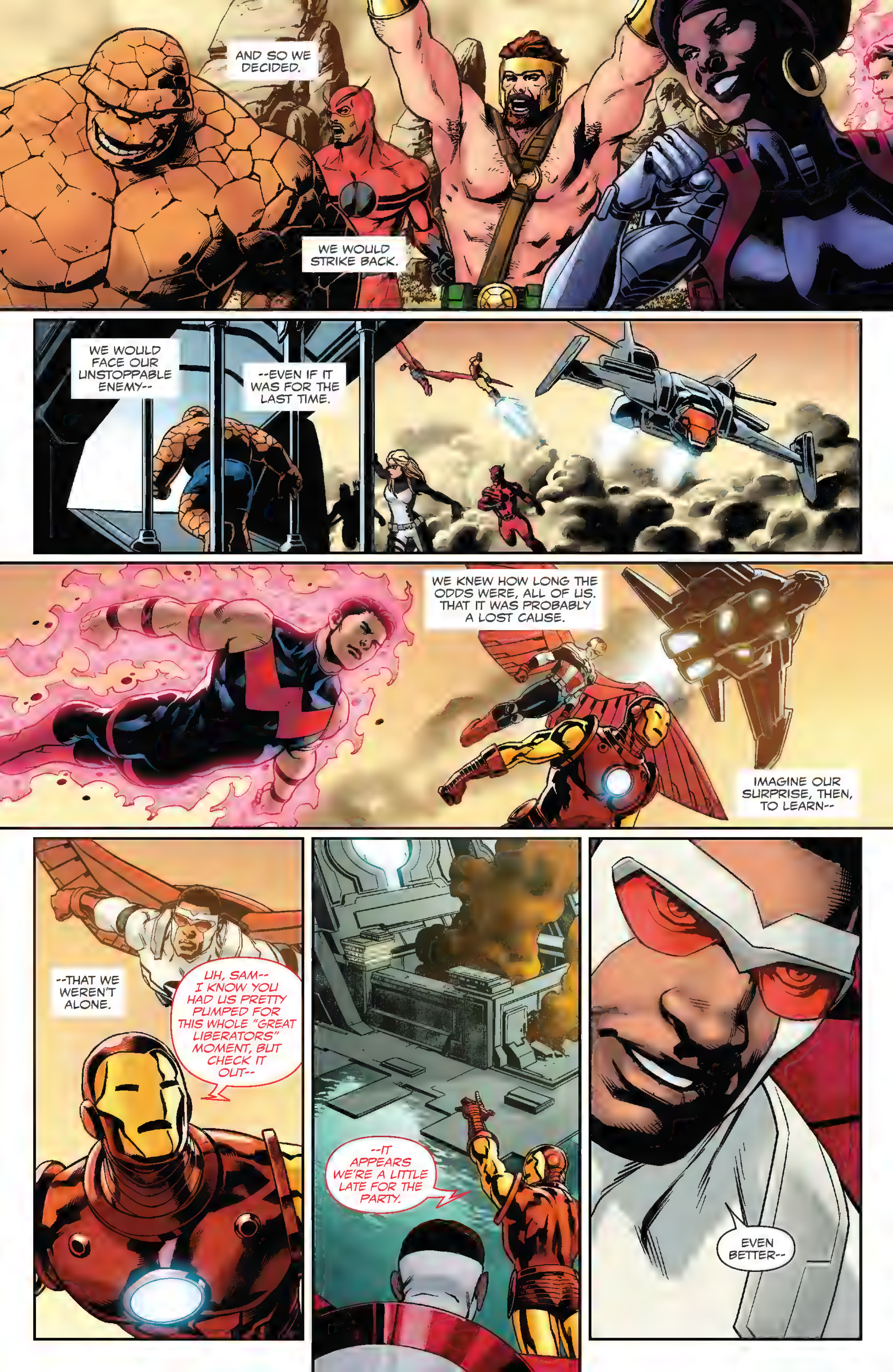

--BUT THEN, I IMAGINE A MAN IN YOUR POSITION SO RARELY HEARS IT.
YOU--
DOCTOR FAUSTUS AT YOUR SERVICE. OR RATHER, AT HYDRA'S. I BELIEVE YOU KNOW MY ASSOCIATE, ZENZI.
T'CHALLA.
IT REALLY IS IMPRESSIVE, T'CHALLA, WHAT YOU'VE DONE HERE. YOUR ONE LITTLE NATION TURNING BACK THE COMBINED MIGHT OF THE MOST POWERFUL ARMY ON EARTH.
IMAGINE WHAT YOU COULD'VE ACCOMPLISHED-- THE HISTORY YOU COULD'VE MADE--
--HAD YOUR PEOPLE REMAINED LOYAL TO YOU.
MY PEOPLE WOULD NEVER--
NOW, DON'T BLAME YOURSELF. I CAN BE QUITE PERSUASIVE. AND IT WASN'T EASY, YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT.
SUCH A STRICTLY ISOLATIONIST, INDEPENDENT CULTURE. THE WAKANDAN MIND IS A...FASCINATING THING.
BUT STILL, SOME ARE MORE MALLEABLE THAN THE OTHERS. AND EVEN IN A PLACE LIKE THIS, A BIT OF GOOD OLD-FASHIONED WESTERN CAPITALISM SEEPS THROUGH. THAT WAS ALL I NEEDED.
I SHOULD SAY THANK YOU-- YOUR NATION HAS ALLOWED ME TO TEST OUT SOME APPROACHES OUR SUPREME LEADER WAS SOMEWHAT...RETICENT TO TRY BACK IN OUR BELOVED HOMELAND. BUT I IMAGINE HE'LL BE SWAYED--
--ONCE HE SEES HOW HALF YOUR ARMY AWAITS MY COMMAND AND DOESN'T EVEN REALIZE IT YET. I NEED ONLY GIVE THE WORD, AND THEY WILL HAPPILY SURRENDER.
NO--
--WE WILL NEVER SURRENDER. WE WILL FIGHT UNTIL-- UHNN--!
OH, GOOD--
--I WAS SO HOPING YOU WOULD RESIST.
ZEMO...
BUT, REALLY, YOU SHOULD CONSIDER FAUSTUS' OFFER OF SURRENDER GENEROUS, T'CHALLA.
IT WOULD BE QUITE EASY FOR HIM TO TELL YOUR SOLDIERS TO TURN THEIR WEAPONS ON THEMSELVES, AFTER ALL...
...MAKING YOU THE KING OF EVEN MORE DEAD MEN.
YES...GO ON, THEN-- MAKE THE DECISION A GOOD RULER MAKES. BUT BE QUICK--
--AND TELL ME WHERE THE CUBE FRAGMENT IS.

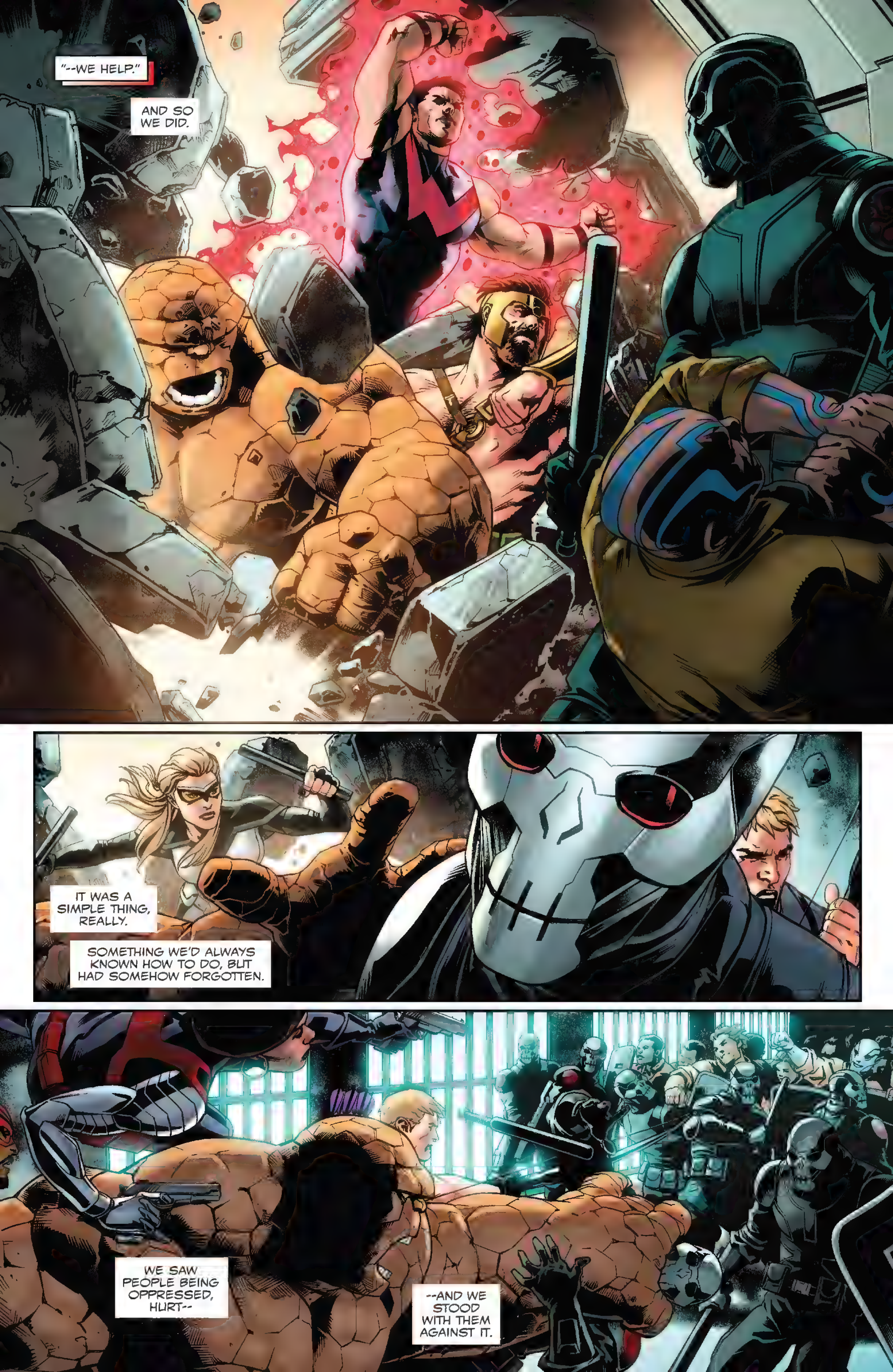

AND SO THE WAR ENDED AS SOON AS IT BEGAN.
WITH HYDRA'S ENEMIES BEATEN--
--THOUGH NOT BROKEN.
BUT EVEN AS THEY STOOD ON THE CUSP OF TOTAL VICTORY, THEIRS WAS NOT THE ONLY SPEECH DELIVERED.
AND WITH THE SECOND ONE--

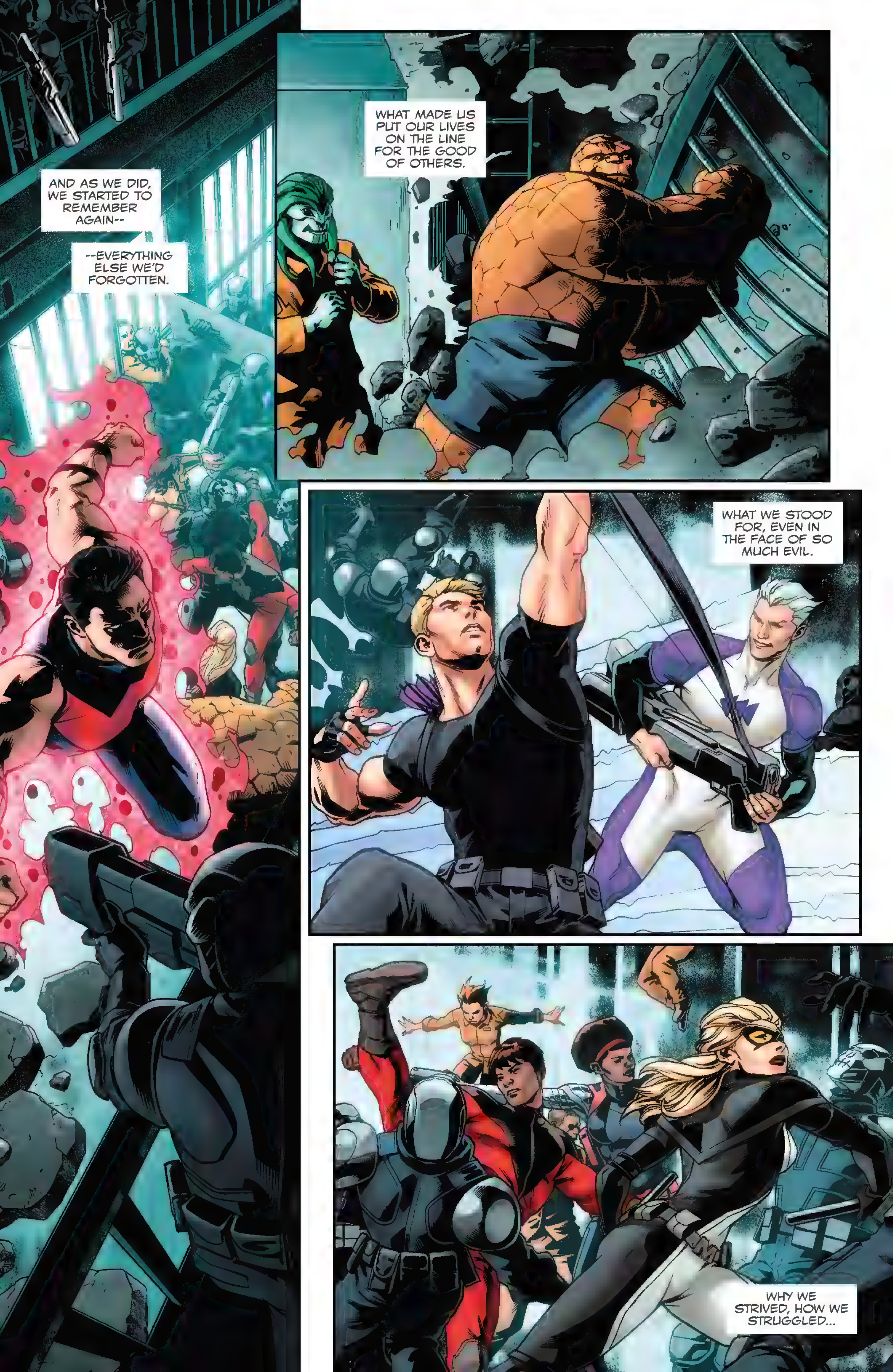

--CAME HOPE.
PAINTED DESERT, NEVADA.
YOU KNOW, WHEN I GOT THIS SHIELD--FIRST THING I SAID WAS, I'M NOT BIG ON SPEECHES.
THEN I WENT AND GAVE A BUNCH ANYWAY--WHEN I SAW SOME THINGS GOING ON IN THE COUNTRY THAT I DIDN'T LIKE, WHEN RHODEY DIED--

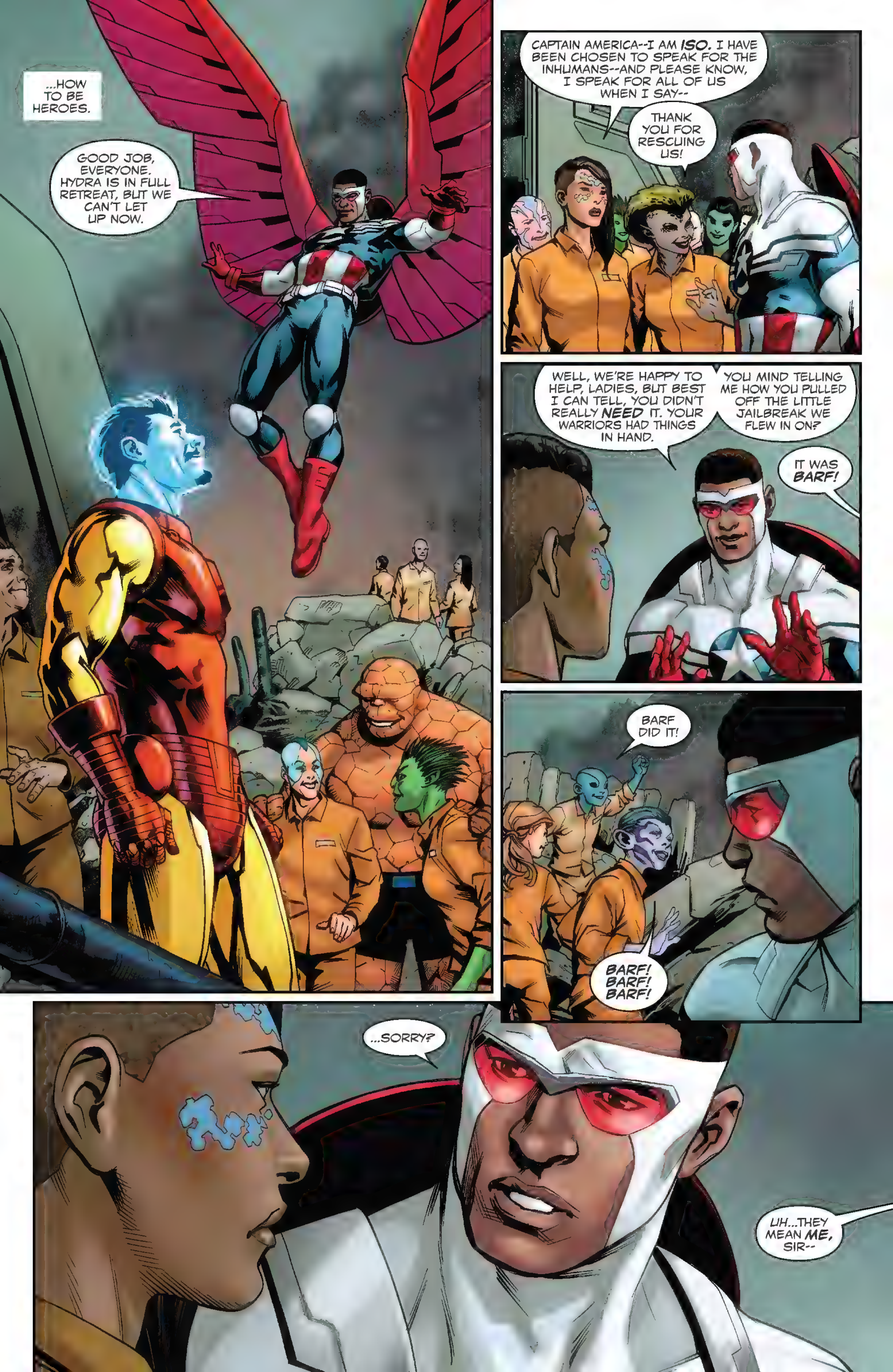

--WHEN I GAVE UP BEING *CAPTAIN AMERICA.*
REALLY, THOUGH, I SHOULDN'T HAVE BEEN SURPRISED.
AFTER ALL, IT WAS PRACTICALLY IN THE JOB DESCRIPTION. WHENEVER THINGS WOULD GO WRONG, EVERYONE LOOKED TO STEVE ROGERS TO TELL THEM WHAT TO DO.
GUESS THAT'S WHAT LANDED US IN THIS MESS TO BEGIN WITH, ISN'T IT?
WHEN THINGS GOT ROUGH, WHEN WE'D WORN OURSELVES DOWN--INSTEAD OF FIXING WHAT WAS BROKEN, TAKING RESPONSIBILITY--
--WE DECIDED IT WAS EASIER TO JUST HAND IT ALL OVER TO HIM, LET HIM DO IT FOR US.
DIDN'T TURN OUT SO WELL.
SO NOW, HERE WE ARE. WITH HIM OUT THERE EVERY DAY, TALKING TO THE COUNTRY, REMINDING EVERYONE HOW BAD WE SCREWED UP. HOW WE CAUSED ALL THIS.
HOW WE SPENT ALL OUR TIME FIGHTING EACH OTHER. CHASING BIG IDEAS THAT BLEW UP IN OUR FACES. FLYING SO HIGH WE LOST TOUCH WITH THE GROUND BENEATH OUR FEET.
BEST I CAN TELL, NONE OF IT'S *WRONG.*
HERE WE SIT--OUR FRIENDS DEAD. OUR HOME DESTROYED. NOTHING LEFT BUT THE BLAME.
OUR GHOSTS ALL CAME BACK, THE BILL WAS DUE. QUESTION IS--

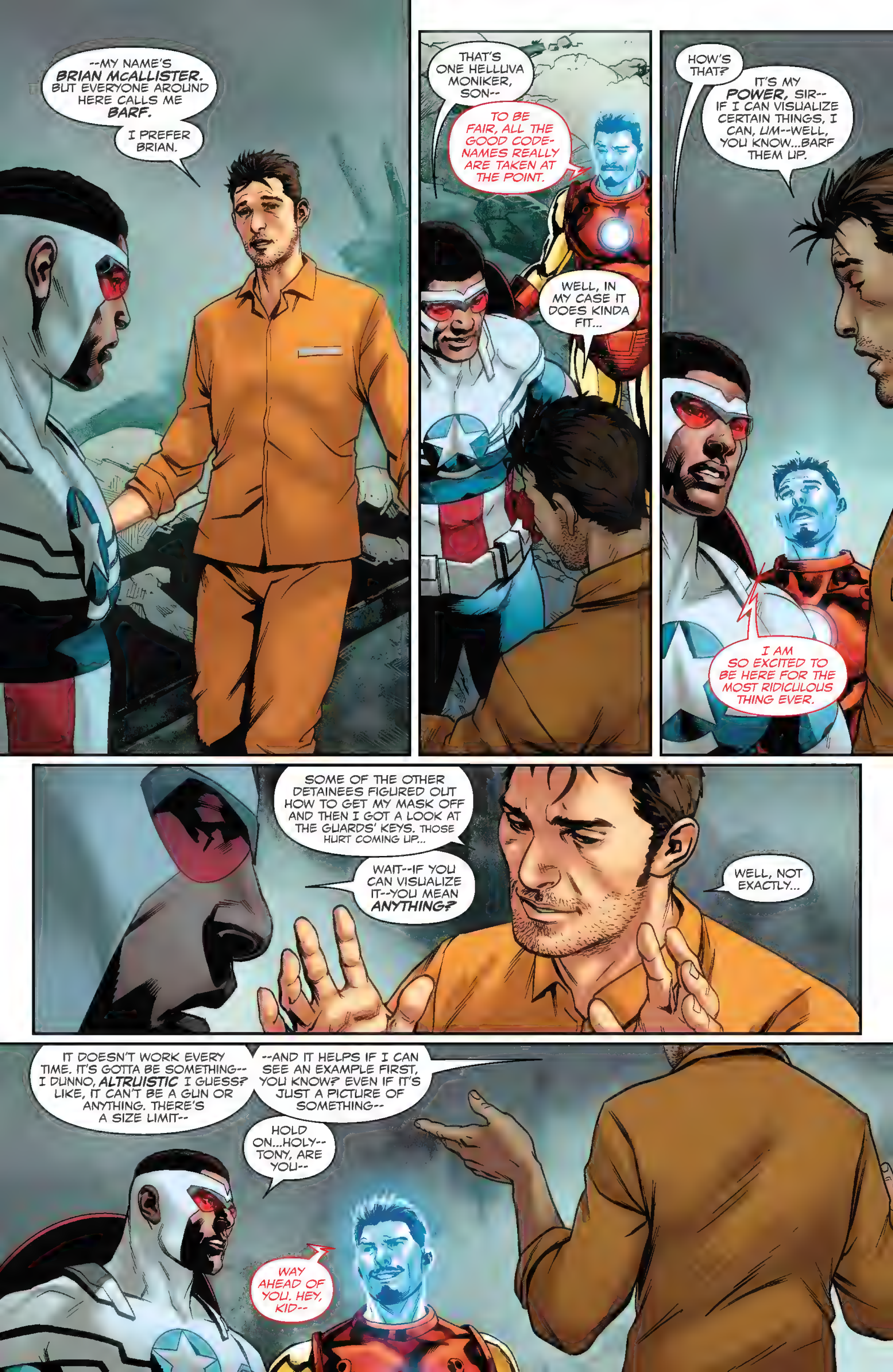

--WHAT DO WE DO NOW?
DO WE GIVE UP? TURN OURSELVES IN? SURRENDER? ADMIT THEY WERE *RIGHT* ABOUT US?
OR DO WE REMEMBER WHO WE *REALLY* ARE?
I LOOK AROUND HERE AND I SEE THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO STOOD UP WHEN *GALACTUS* CAME. WHEN THE *SKRULLS* ATTACKED. THE ONES WHO PUT THEIR OWN LIVES ON THE LINE TO SAVE OTHERS.
AND THAT'S STILL *WHO YOU ARE.* MAYBE IT'S NOT WHAT PEOPLE REMEMBER FIRST ANYMORE. MAYBE IT'S NOT HOW YOU SEE YOURSELVES--
--BUT YOU CAN STILL *BE* THAT. MIGHT BE A LITTLE RUSTY AT IT, BUT YOU STILL KNOW *HOW.*
AT THAT PRISON CAMP THEY BUILT ON NEW ATTILAN, THEY'RE PROCESSING *THOUSANDS* OF NEWLY CAPTURED INHUMANS TODAY.
I SAY WE GO AND TRY TO STOP IT. TRY TO *FREE* THOSE PEOPLE. DO IT LIKE WE'RE *SUPPOSED* TO--SAVE SOME LIVES, STAND UP FOR WHAT'S RIGHT. *BE HEROES.*
NO QUESTION THEY'LL HAVE US OUTGUNNED--THAT WE MIGHT LOSE. MAYBE *DIE.* I DON'T THINK I CARE ANYMORE. ALL I WANT IS THE FIGHT.
THESE PEOPLE--*HYDRA*--EXECUTED OUR FRIENDS. THEY MURDERED AN ENTIRE CITY. THEY'VE LOCKED UP MILLIONS, ARE CHASING AFTER MILLIONS MORE. *INNOCENTS.*
WHO WANTS TO *SPEAK* FOR THOSE PEOPLE?
WHO'S GOING TO BE THEIR *JUSTICE?*
WHO WANTS TO BE THEIR *AVENGERS?!*

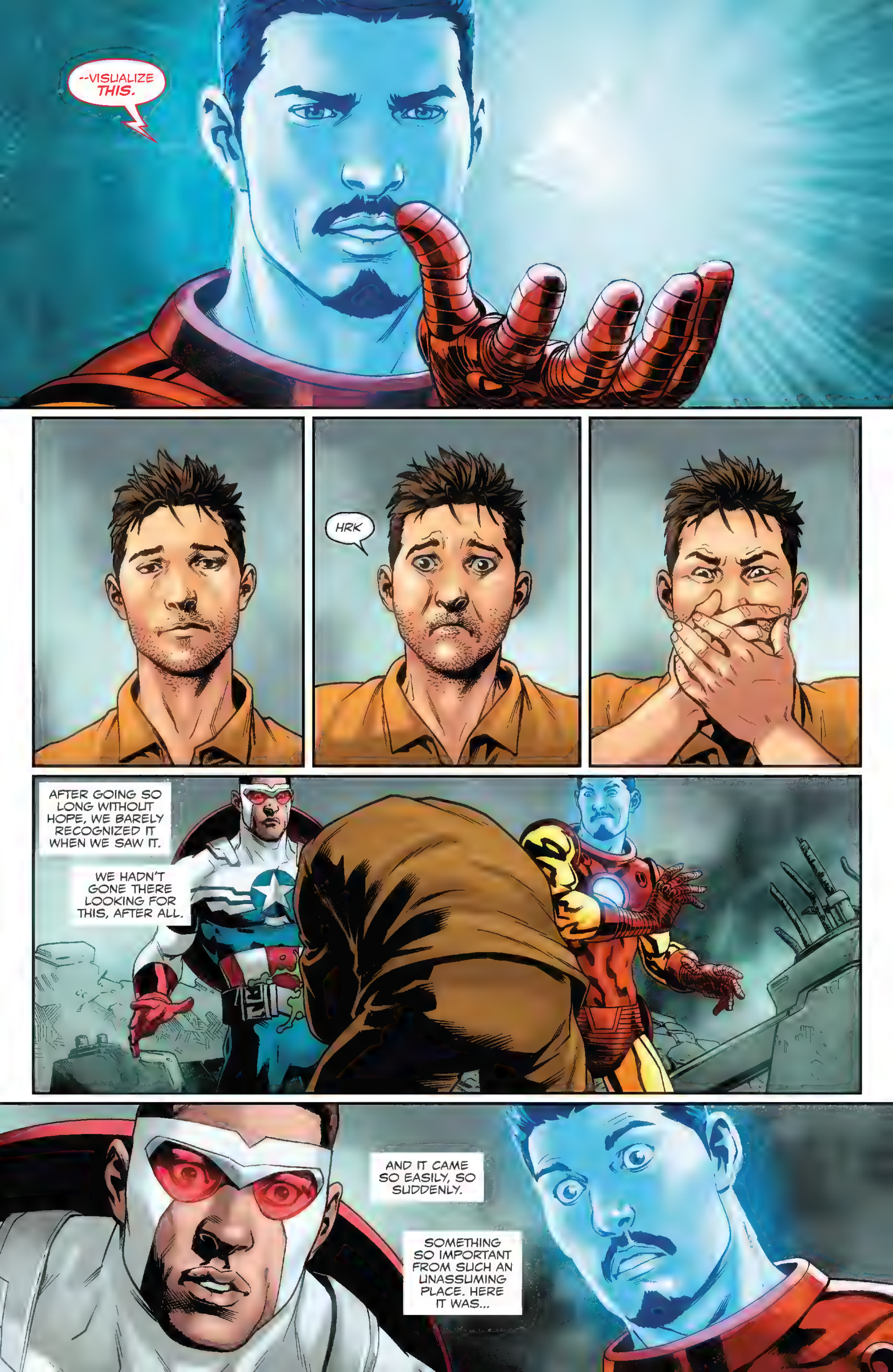

AND SO WE DECIDED.
WE WOULD STRIKE BACK.
WE WOULD FACE OUR UNSTOPPABLE ENEMY--
--EVEN IF IT WAS FOR THE LAST TIME.
WE KNEW HOW LONG THE ODDS WERE, ALL OF US. THAT IT WAS PROBABLY A LOST CAUSE.
IMAGINE OUR SURPRISE, THEN, TO LEARN--
--THAT WE WEREN'T ALONE.
UH, SAM-- I KNOW YOU HAD US PRETTY PUMPED FOR THIS WHOLE "GREAT LIBERATORS" MOMENT, BUT CHECK IT OUT--
--IT APPEARS WE'RE A LITTLE LATE FOR THE PARTY.
EVEN BETTER--

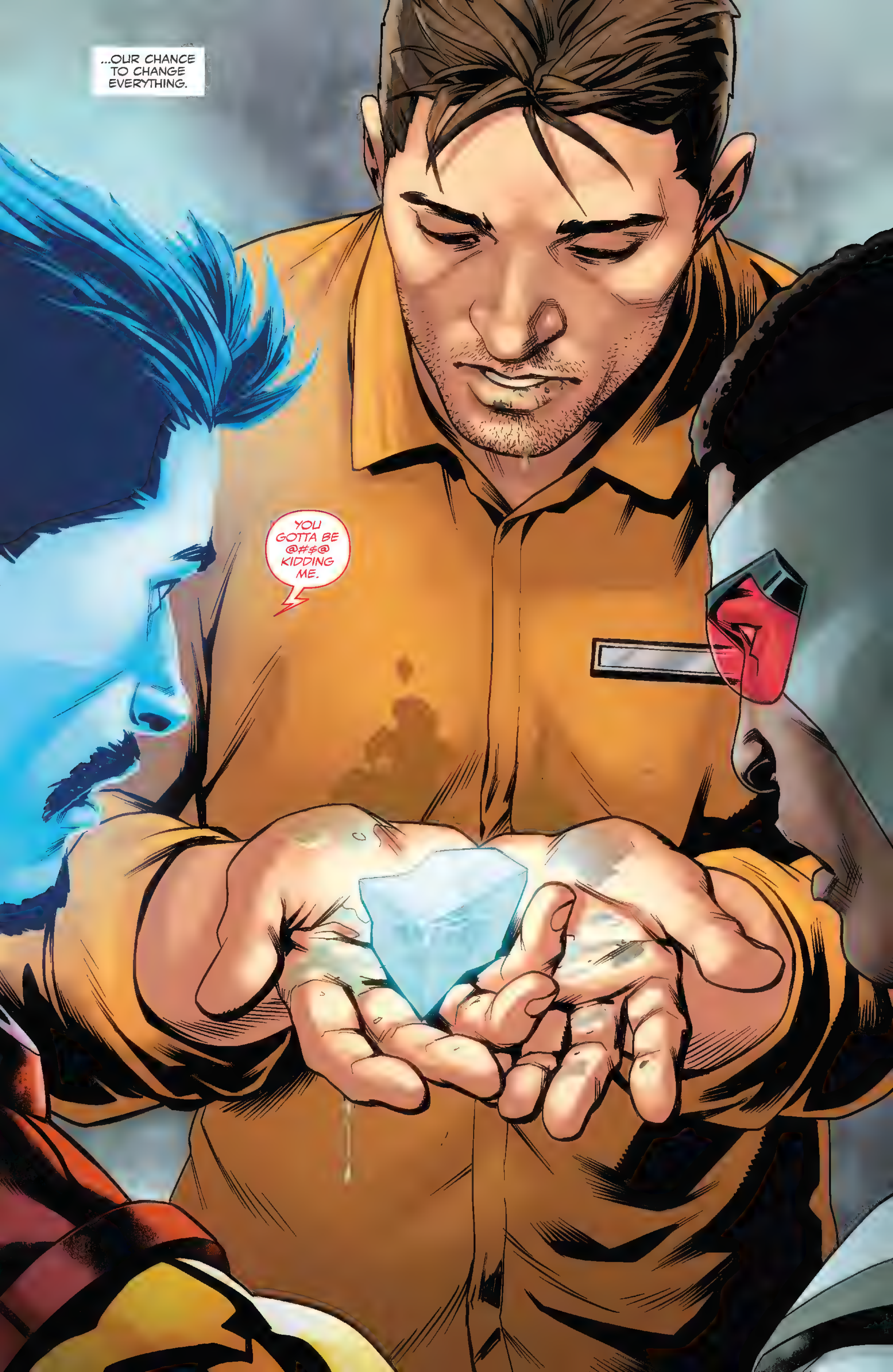

"--WE HELP."
AND SO WE DID.
IT WAS A SIMPLE THING, REALLY.
SOMETHING WE'D ALWAYS KNOWN HOW TO DO, BUT HAD SOMEHOW FORGOTTEN.
WE SAW PEOPLE BEING OPPRESSED, HURT--
--AND WE STOOD WITH THEM AGAINST IT.

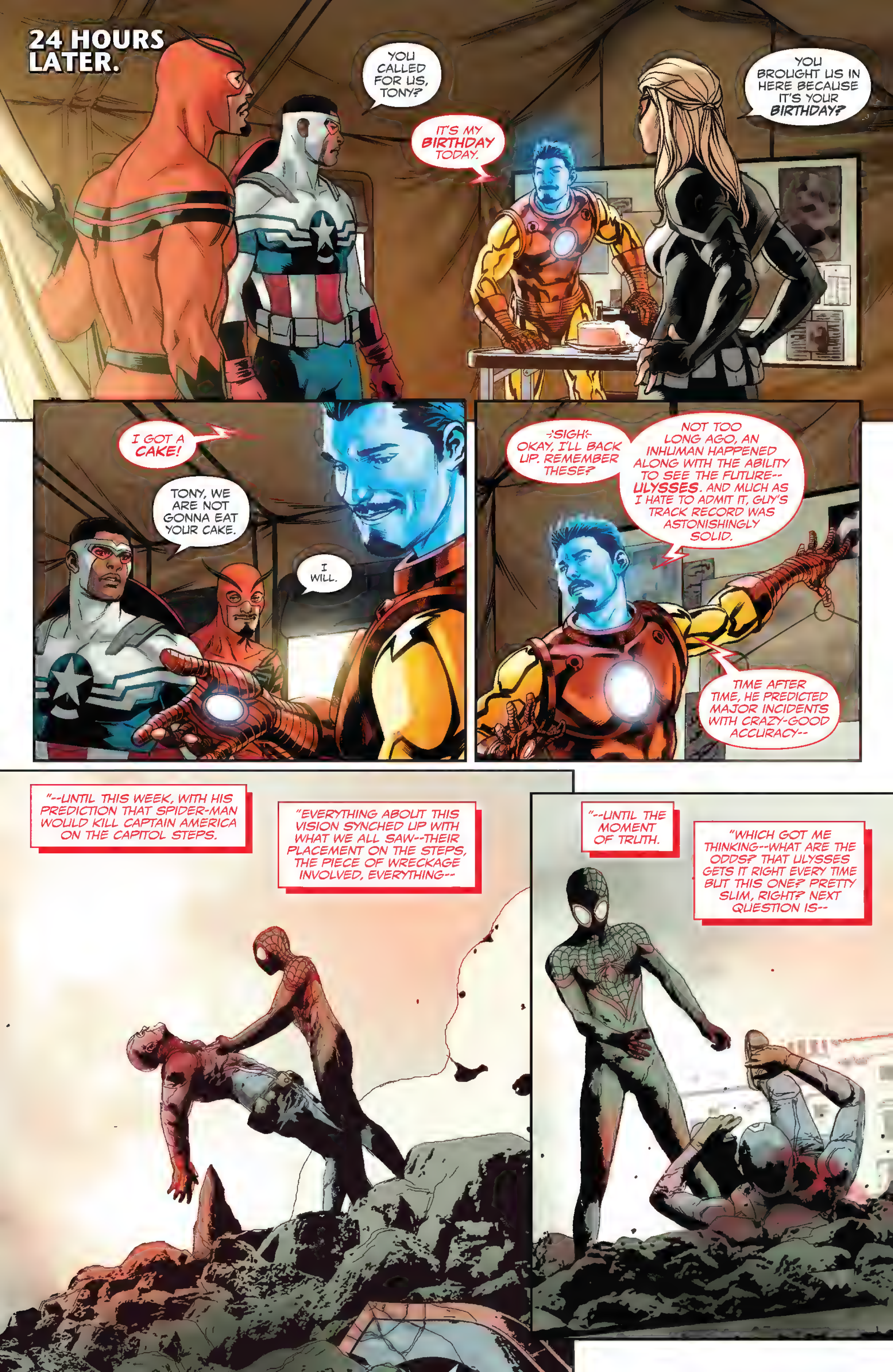

AND AS WE DID, WE STARTED TO REMEMBER AGAIN--
--EVERYTHING ELSE WE'D FORGOTTEN.
WHAT MADE US PUT OUR LIVES ON THE LINE FOR THE GOOD OF OTHERS.
WHAT WE STOOD FOR, EVEN IN THE FACE OF SO MUCH EVIL.
WHY WE STRIVED, HOW WE STRUGGLED...

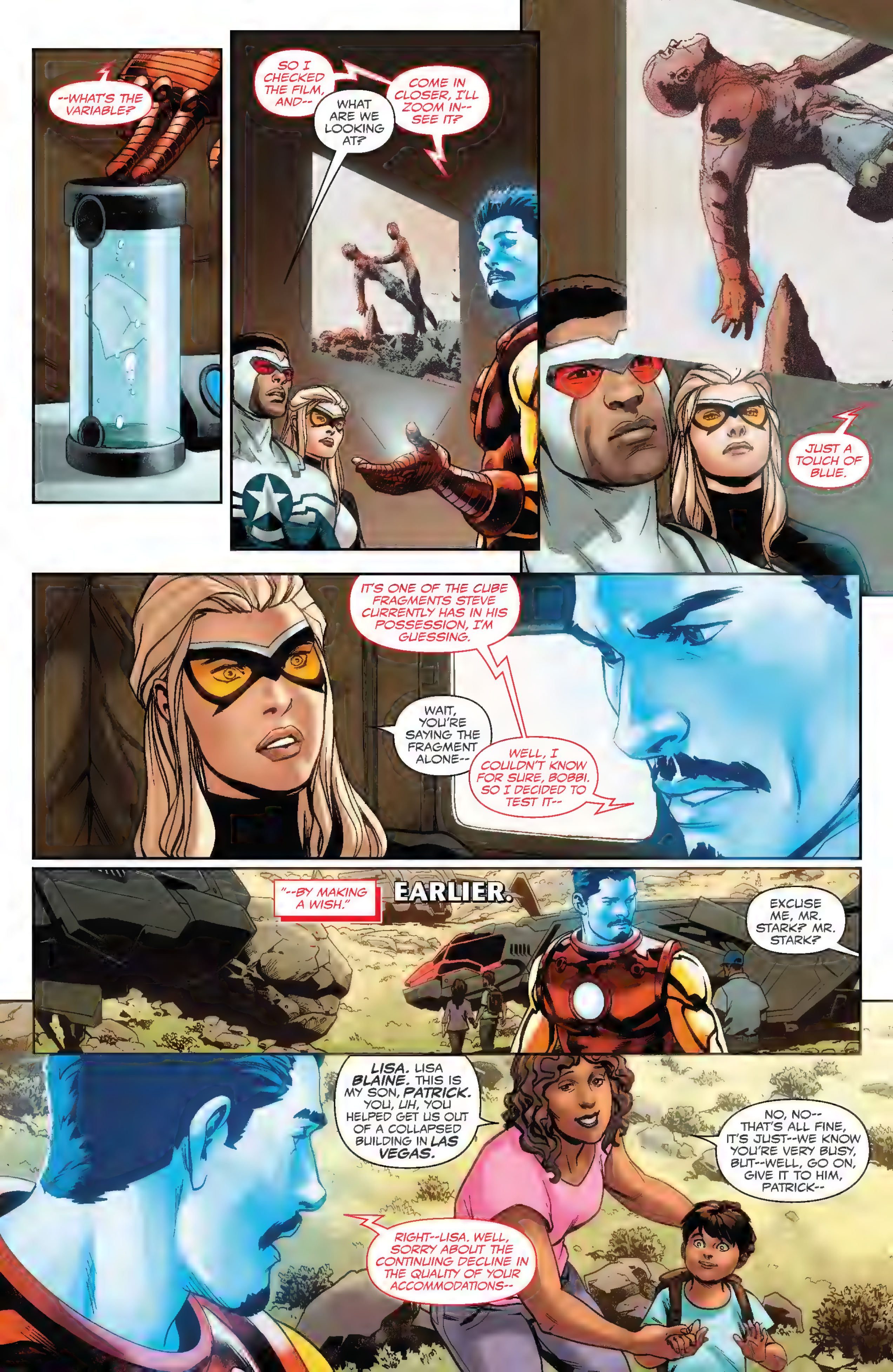

...HOW TO BE HEROES.
GOOD JOB, EVERYONE. HYDRA IS IN FULL RETREAT, BUT WE CAN'T LET UP NOW.
CAPTAIN AMERICA--I AM ***ISO.*** I HAVE BEEN CHOSEN TO SPEAK FOR THE INHUMANS--AND PLEASE KNOW, I SPEAK FOR ALL OF US WHEN I SAY--
THANK YOU FOR RESCUING US!
WELL, WE'RE HAPPY TO HELP, LADIES, BUT BEST I CAN TELL, YOU DIDN'T REALLY ***NEED*** IT. YOUR WARRIORS HAD THINGS IN HAND.
YOU MIND TELLING ME HOW YOU PULLED OFF THE LITTLE JAILBREAK WE FLEW IN ON?
IT WAS ***BARF!***
BARF DID IT!
***BARF! BARF! BARF!***
...SORRY?
UH...THEY MEAN ***ME,*** SIR--

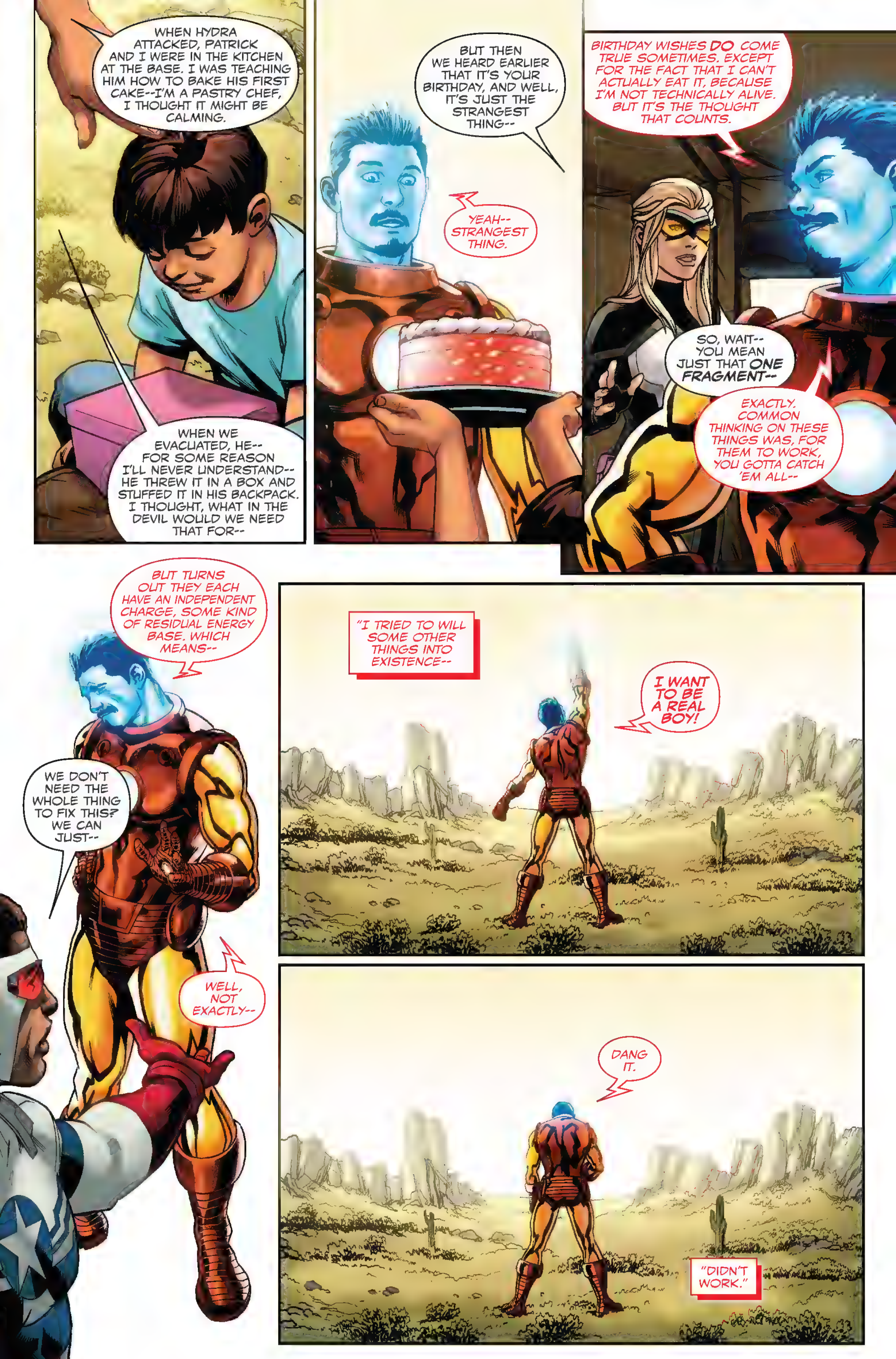

--MY NAME'S **BRIAN McALLISTER.** BUT EVERYONE AROUND HERE CALLS ME **BARF.**
I PREFER BRIAN.
THAT'S ONE HELLUVA MONIKER, SON--
TO BE FAIR, ALL THE GOOD CODE-NAMES REALLY ARE TAKEN AT THE POINT.
WELL, IN MY CASE IT DOES KINDA FIT...
HOW'S THAT?
IT'S MY **POWER,** SIR--IF I CAN VISUALIZE CERTAIN THINGS, I CAN, UM--WELL, YOU KNOW...BARF THEM UP.
I AM SO EXCITED TO BE HERE FOR THE MOST RIDICULOUS THING EVER.
SOME OF THE OTHER DETAINEES FIGURED OUT HOW TO GET MY MASK OFF AND THEN I GOT A LOOK AT THE GUARDS' KEYS. THOSE HURT COMING UP...
WAIT--IF YOU CAN VISUALIZE IT--YOU MEAN ***ANYTHING?***
WELL, NOT EXACTLY...
IT DOESN'T WORK EVERY TIME. IT'S GOTTA BE SOMETHING--I DUNNO, ***ALTRUISTIC*** I GUESS? LIKE, IT CAN'T BE A GUN OR ANYTHING. THERE'S A SIZE LIMIT--
--AND IT HELPS IF I CAN SEE AN EXAMPLE FIRST, YOU KNOW? EVEN IF IT'S JUST A PICTURE OF SOMETHING--
HOLD ON...HOLY--TONY, ARE YOU--
WAY AHEAD OF YOU. HEY, KID--

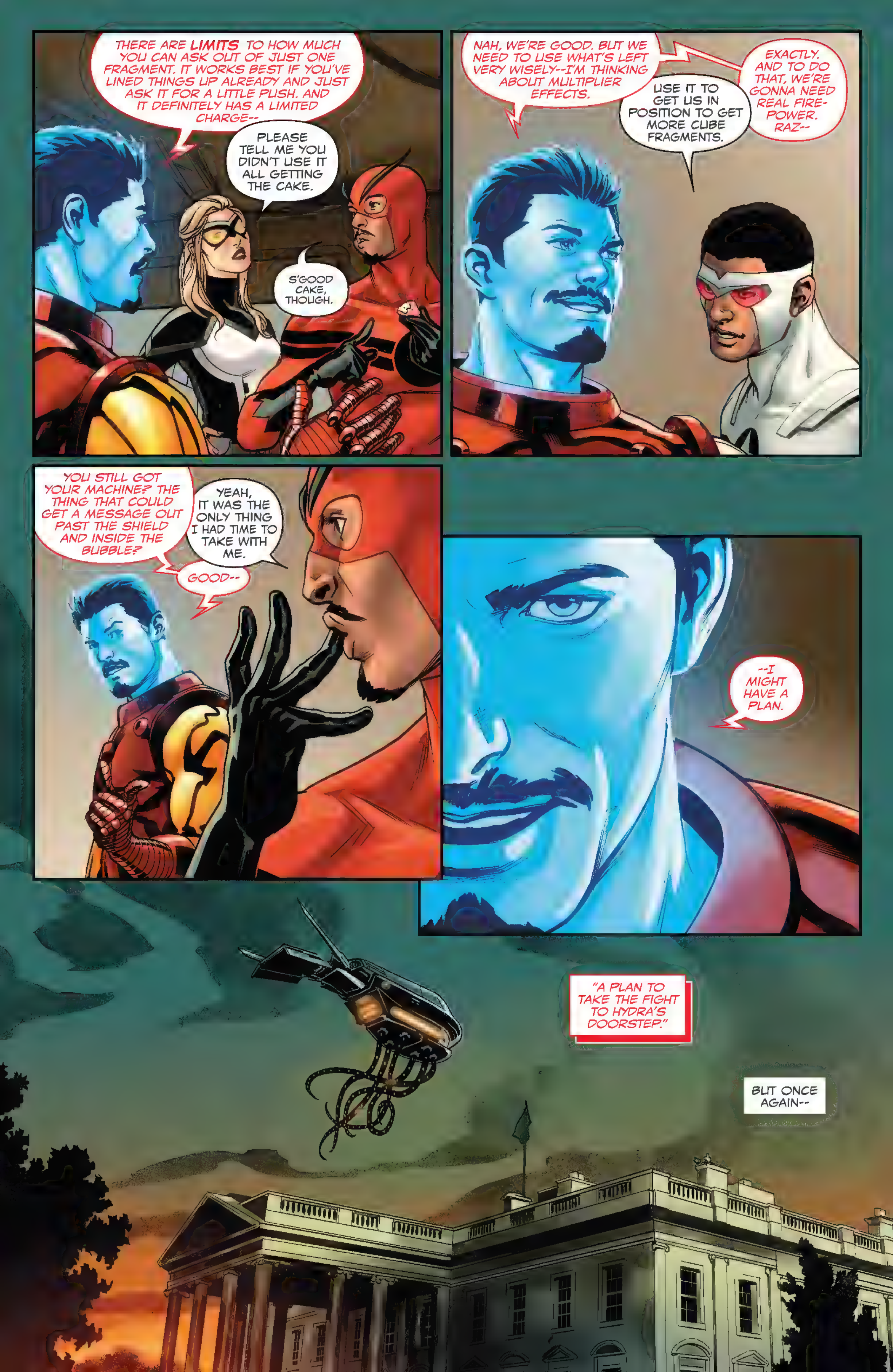

--VISUALIZE *THIS.*
HRK
AFTER GOING SO LONG WITHOUT HOPE, WE BARELY RECOGNIZED IT WHEN WE SAW IT.
WE HADN'T GONE THERE LOOKING FOR THIS, AFTER ALL.
AND IT CAME SO EASILY, SO SUDDENLY.
SOMETHING SO IMPORTANT FROM SUCH AN UNASSUMING PLACE. HERE IT WAS...

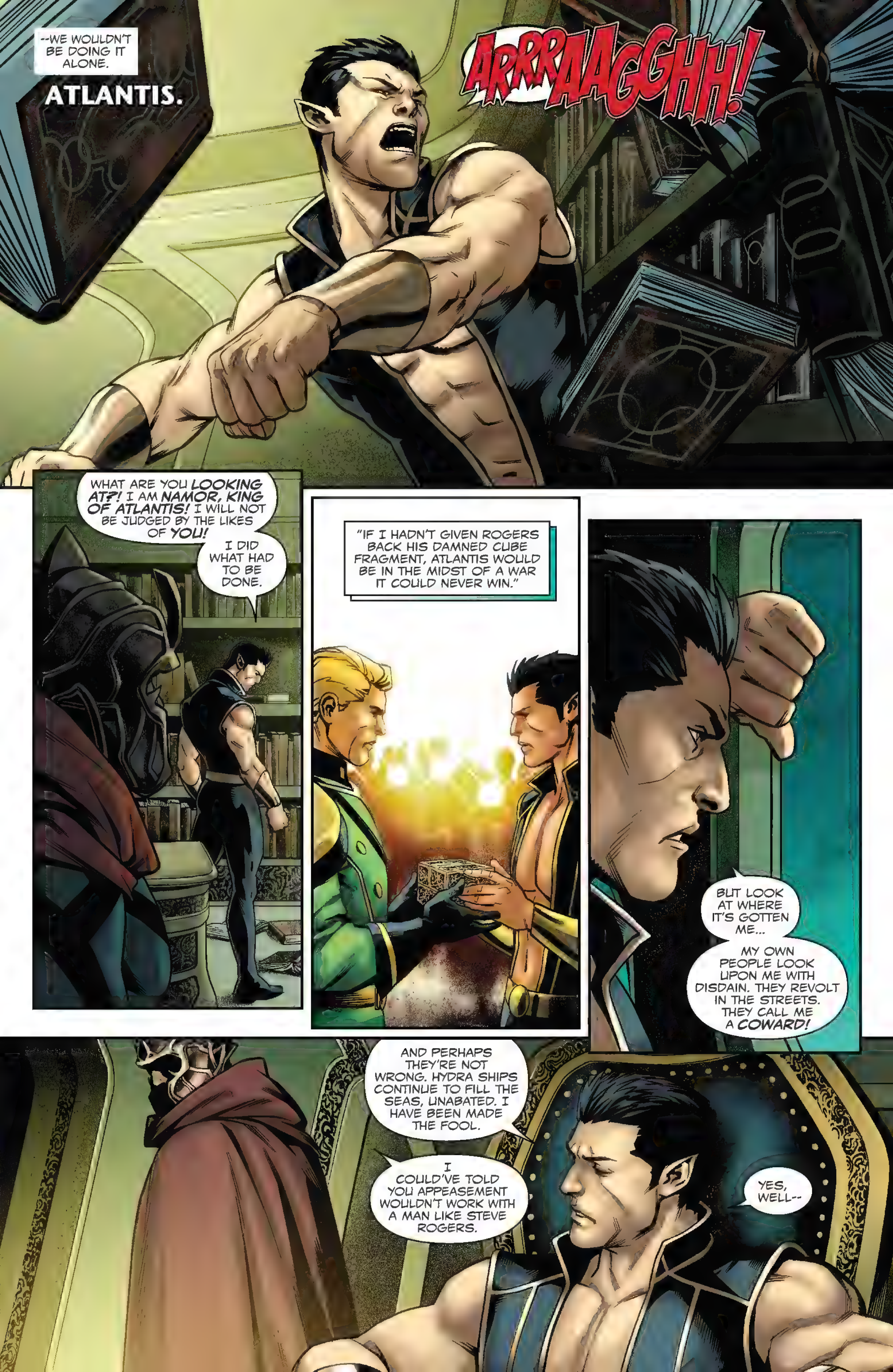

...OUR CHANCE TO CHANGE EVERYTHING.
YOU GOTTA BE @#$@ KIDDING ME.

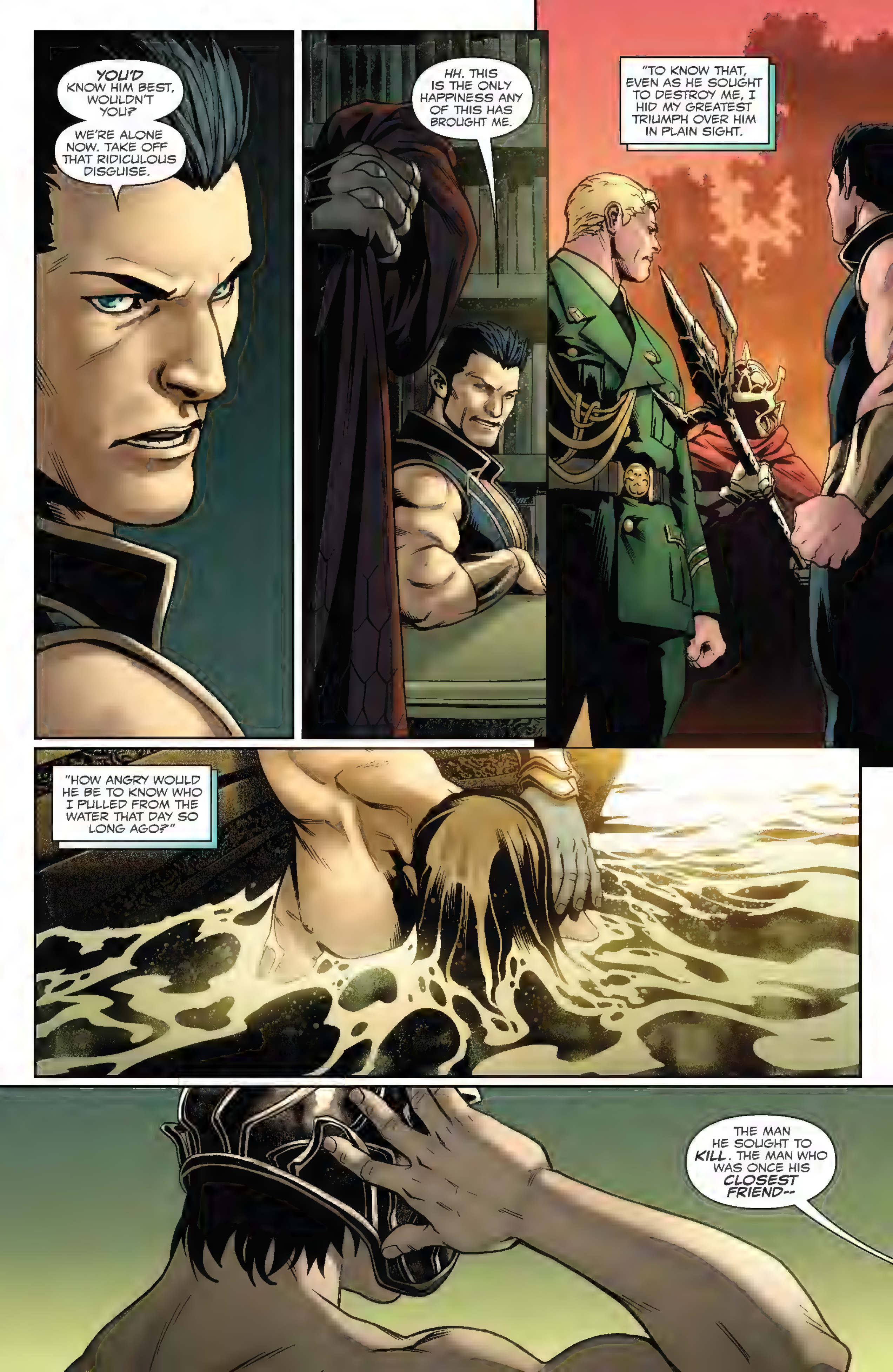

24 HOURS LATER.
YOU CALLED FOR US, TONY?
IT'S MY BIRTHDAY TODAY.
YOU BROUGHT US IN HERE BECAUSE IT'S YOUR BIRTHDAY?
I GOT A CAKE!
TONY, WE ARE NOT GONNA EAT YOUR CAKE.
I WILL.
-SIGH- OKAY, I'LL BACK UP. REMEMBER THESE?
NOT TOO LONG AGO, AN INHUMAN HAPPENED ALONG WITH THE ABILITY TO SEE THE FUTURE--ULYSSES. AND MUCH AS I HATE TO ADMIT IT, GUY'S TRACK RECORD WAS ASTONISHINGLY SOLID.
TIME AFTER TIME, HE PREDICTED MAJOR INCIDENTS WITH CRAZY-GOOD ACCURACY--
"--UNTIL THIS WEEK, WITH HIS PREDICTION THAT SPIDER-MAN WOULD KILL CAPTAIN AMERICA ON THE CAPITOL STEPS.
"EVERYTHING ABOUT THIS VISION SYNCHED UP WITH WHAT WE ALL SAW--THEIR PLACEMENT ON THE STEPS, THE PIECE OF WRECKAGE INVOLVED, EVERYTHING--
"--UNTIL THE MOMENT OF TRUTH.
"WHICH GOT ME THINKING--WHAT ARE THE ODDS? THAT ULYSSES GETS IT RIGHT EVERY TIME BUT THIS ONE? PRETTY SLIM, RIGHT? NEXT QUESTION IS--

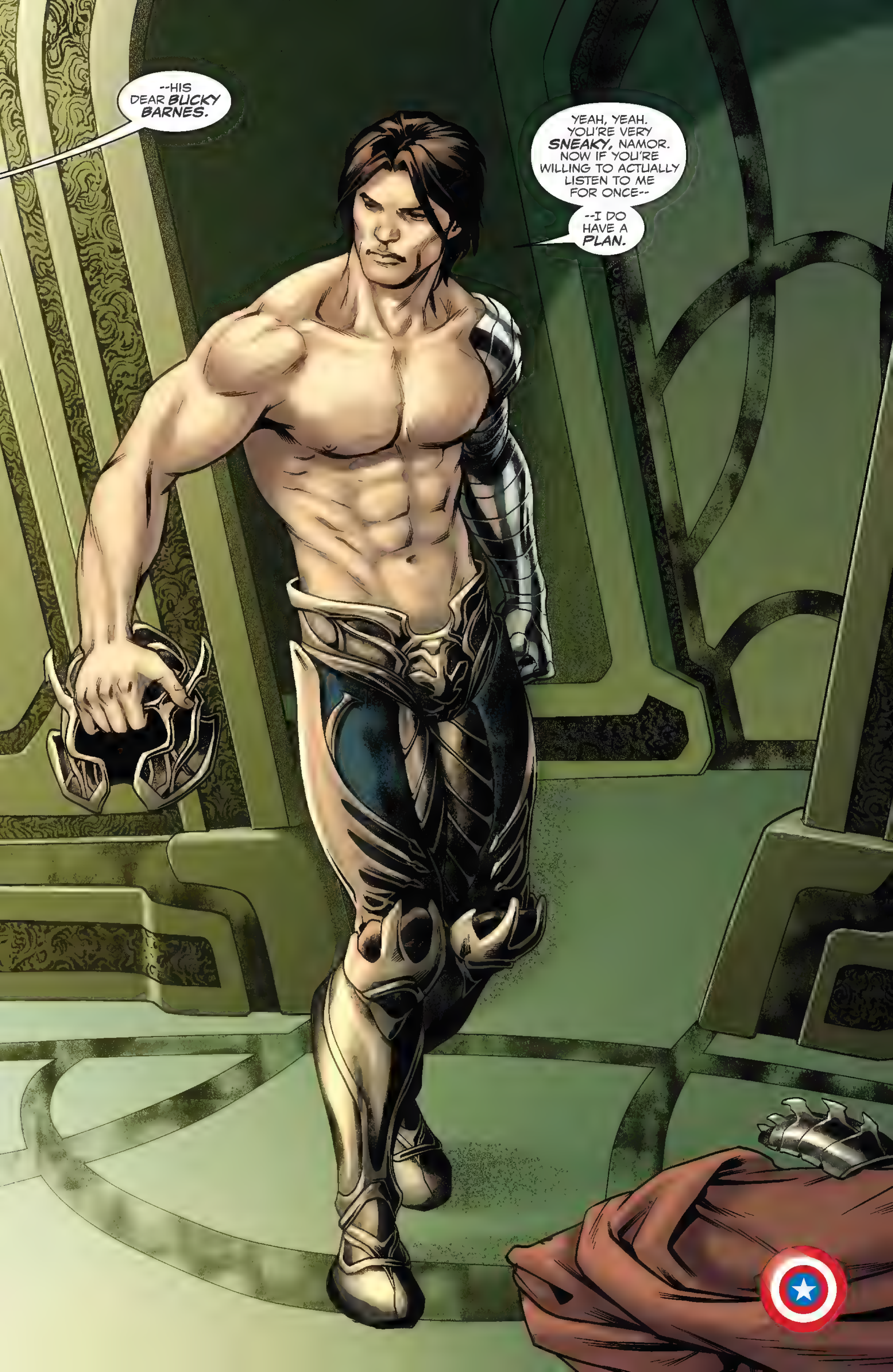

--WHAT'S THE VARIABLE?
SO I CHECKED THE FILM, AND--
WHAT ARE WE LOOKING AT?
COME IN CLOSER, I'LL ZOOM IN--SEE IT?
JUST A TOUCH OF BLUE.
IT'S ONE OF THE CUBE FRAGMENTS STEVE CURRENTLY HAS IN HIS POSSESSION, I'M GUESSING.
WAIT, YOU'RE SAYING THE FRAGMENT ALONE--
WELL, I COULDN'T KNOW FOR SURE, BOBBI. SO I DECIDED TO TEST IT--
"--BY MAKING A WISH."
EARLIER.
EXCUSE ME, MR. STARK? MR. STARK?
LISA. LISA BLAINE. THIS IS MY SON, PATRICK. YOU, UH, YOU HELPED GET US OUT OF A COLLAPSED BUILDING IN LAS VEGAS.
RIGHT--LISA. WELL, SORRY ABOUT THE CONTINUING DECLINE IN THE QUALITY OF YOUR ACCOMMODATIONS--
NO, NO--THAT'S ALL FINE, IT'S JUST--WE KNOW YOU'RE VERY BUSY, BUT--WELL, GO ON, GIVE IT TO HIM, PATRICK--


WHEN HYDRA ATTACKED, PATRICK AND I WERE IN THE KITCHEN AT THE BASE. I WAS TEACHING HIM HOW TO BAKE HIS FIRST CAKE--I'M A PASTRY CHEF, I THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE CALMING.
WHEN WE EVACUATED, HE-- FOR SOME REASON I'LL NEVER UNDERSTAND-- HE THREW IT IN A BOX AND STUFFED IT IN HIS BACKPACK. I THOUGHT, WHAT IN THE DEVIL WOULD WE NEED THAT FOR--
BUT THEN WE HEARD EARLIER THAT IT'S YOUR BIRTHDAY, AND WELL, IT'S JUST THE STRANGEST THING--
YEAH-- STRANGEST THING.
BIRTHDAY WISHES **DO** COME TRUE SOMETIMES. EXCEPT FOR THE FACT THAT I CAN'T ACTUALLY EAT IT, BECAUSE I'M NOT TECHNICALLY ALIVE. BUT IT'S THE THOUGHT THAT COUNTS.
SO, WAIT-- YOU MEAN JUST THAT **ONE FRAGMENT**--
EXACTLY. COMMON THINKING ON THESE THINGS WAS, FOR THEM TO WORK, YOU GOTTA CATCH 'EM ALL--
BUT TURNS OUT THEY EACH HAVE AN INDEPENDENT CHARGE, SOME KIND OF RESIDUAL ENERGY BASE. WHICH MEANS--
WE DON'T NEED THE WHOLE THING TO FIX THIS? WE CAN JUST--
WELL, NOT EXACTLY--
"I TRIED TO WILL SOME OTHER THINGS INTO EXISTENCE--
I WANT TO BE A REAL BOY!
DANG IT.
"DIDN'T WORK."


THERE ARE **LIMITS** TO HOW MUCH YOU CAN ASK OUT OF JUST ONE FRAGMENT. IT WORKS BEST IF YOU'VE LINED THINGS UP ALREADY AND JUST ASK IT FOR A LITTLE PUSH. AND IT DEFINITELY HAS A LIMITED CHARGE--
PLEASE TELL ME YOU DIDN'T USE IT ALL GETTING THE CAKE.
S'GOOD CAKE, THOUGH.
NAH, WE'RE GOOD. BUT WE NEED TO USE WHAT'S LEFT VERY WISELY--I'M THINKING ABOUT MULTIPLIER EFFECTS.
USE IT TO GET US IN POSITION TO GET MORE CUBE FRAGMENTS.
EXACTLY. AND TO DO THAT, WE'RE GONNA NEED REAL FIRE-POWER. RAZ--
YOU STILL GOT YOUR MACHINE? THE THING THAT COULD GET A MESSAGE OUT PAST THE SHIELD AND INSIDE THE BUBBLE?
YEAH, IT WAS THE ONLY THING I HAD TIME TO TAKE WITH ME.
GOOD--
--I MIGHT HAVE A PLAN.
"A PLAN TO TAKE THE FIGHT TO HYDRA'S DOORSTEP."
BUT ONCE AGAIN--


--WE WOULDN'T BE DOING IT ALONE.
ATLANTIS.
ARRRAAGGHH!
WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT?! I AM NAMOR, KING OF ATLANTIS! I WILL NOT BE JUDGED BY THE LIKES OF YOU!
I DID WHAT HAD TO BE DONE.
"IF I HADN'T GIVEN ROGERS BACK HIS DAMNED CUBE FRAGMENT, ATLANTIS WOULD BE IN THE MIDST OF A WAR IT COULD NEVER WIN."
BUT LOOK AT WHERE IT'S GOTTEN ME...
MY OWN PEOPLE LOOK UPON ME WITH DISDAIN. THEY REVOLT IN THE STREETS. THEY CALL ME A COWARD!
AND PERHAPS THEY'RE NOT WRONG. HYDRA SHIPS CONTINUE TO FILL THE SEAS, UNABATED. I HAVE BEEN MADE THE FOOL.
I COULD'VE TOLD YOU APPEASEMENT WOULDN'T WORK WITH A MAN LIKE STEVE ROGERS.
YES, WELL--


YOU'D KNOW HIM BEST, WOULDN'T YOU?
WE'RE ALONE NOW. TAKE OFF THAT RIDICULOUS DISGUISE.
HH. THIS IS THE ONLY HAPPINESS ANY OF THIS HAS BROUGHT ME.
"TO KNOW THAT, EVEN AS HE SOUGHT TO DESTROY ME, I HID MY GREATEST TRIUMPH OVER HIM IN PLAIN SIGHT.
"HOW ANGRY WOULD HE BE TO KNOW WHO I PULLED FROM THE WATER THAT DAY SO LONG AGO?"
THE MAN HE SOUGHT TO KILL. THE MAN WHO WAS ONCE HIS CLOSEST FRIEND--


--HIS DEAR *BUCKY BARNES.*
YEAH, YEAH. YOU'RE VERY *SNEAKY,* NAMOR. NOW IF YOU'RE WILLING TO ACTUALLY LISTEN TO ME FOR ONCE--
--I DO HAVE A *PLAN.*

SECRET EMPIRE
#8
BROOKS

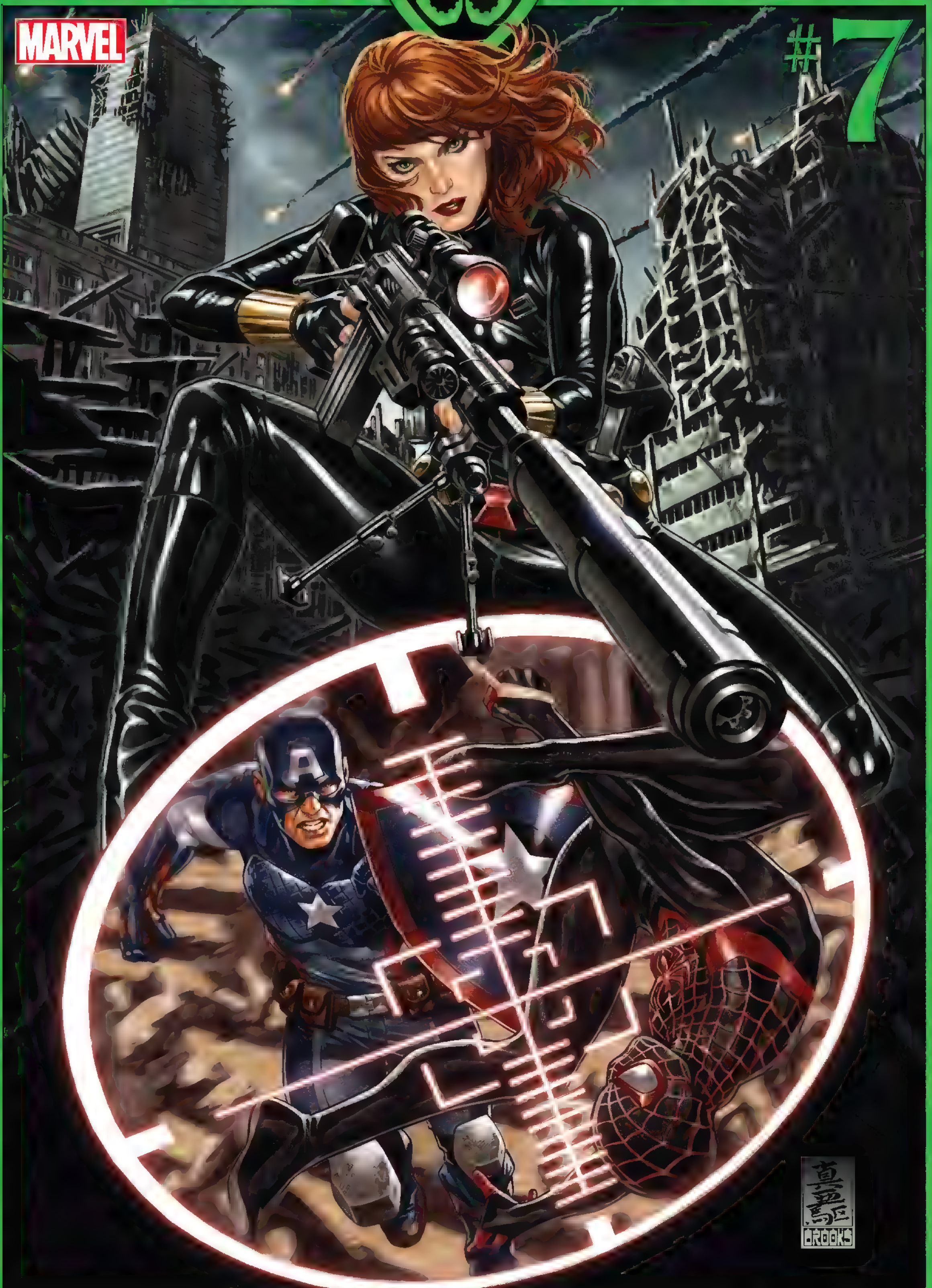
**NEXT**

**ON SALE NOW!**

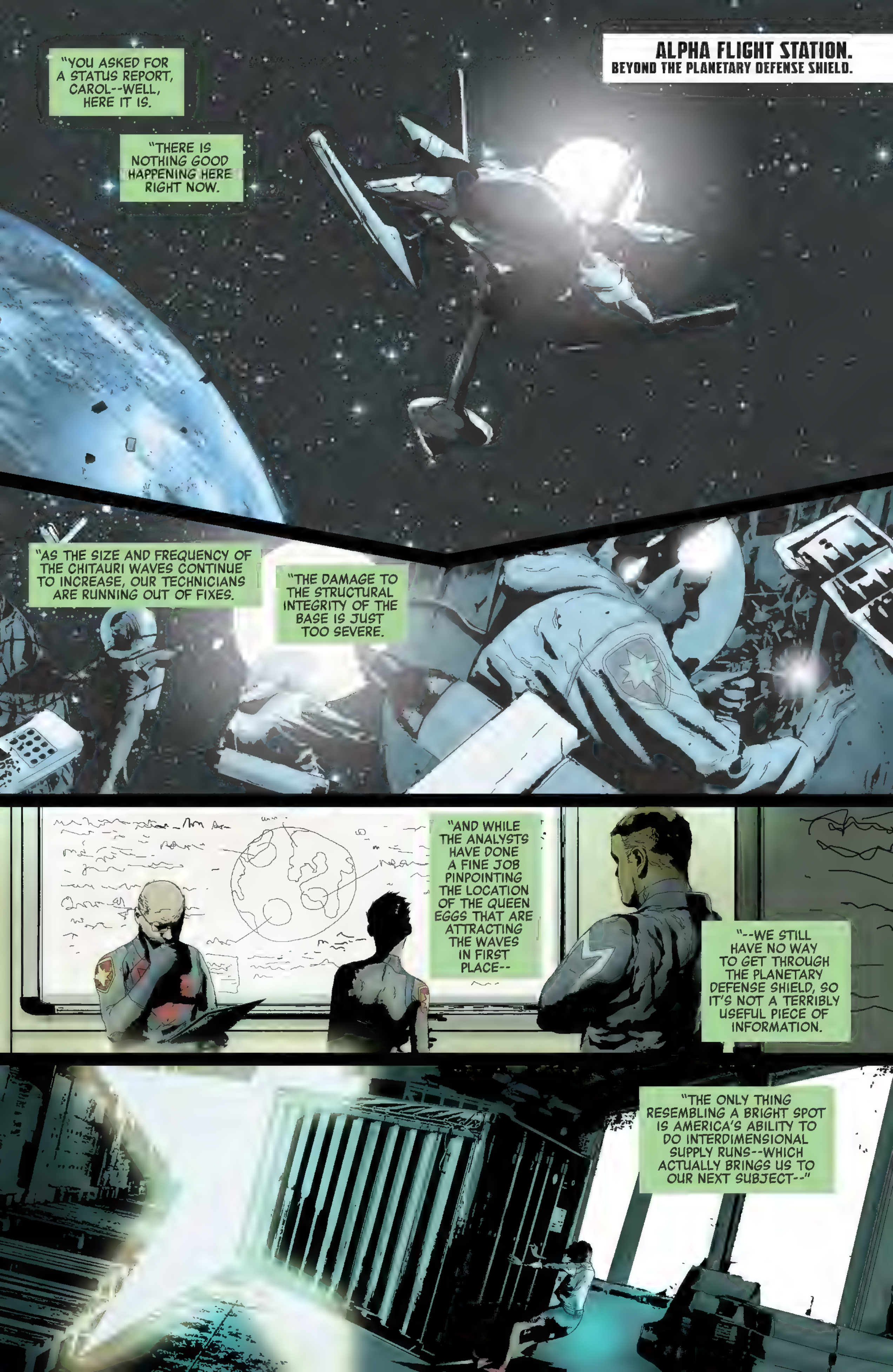
# SECRET EMPIRE™

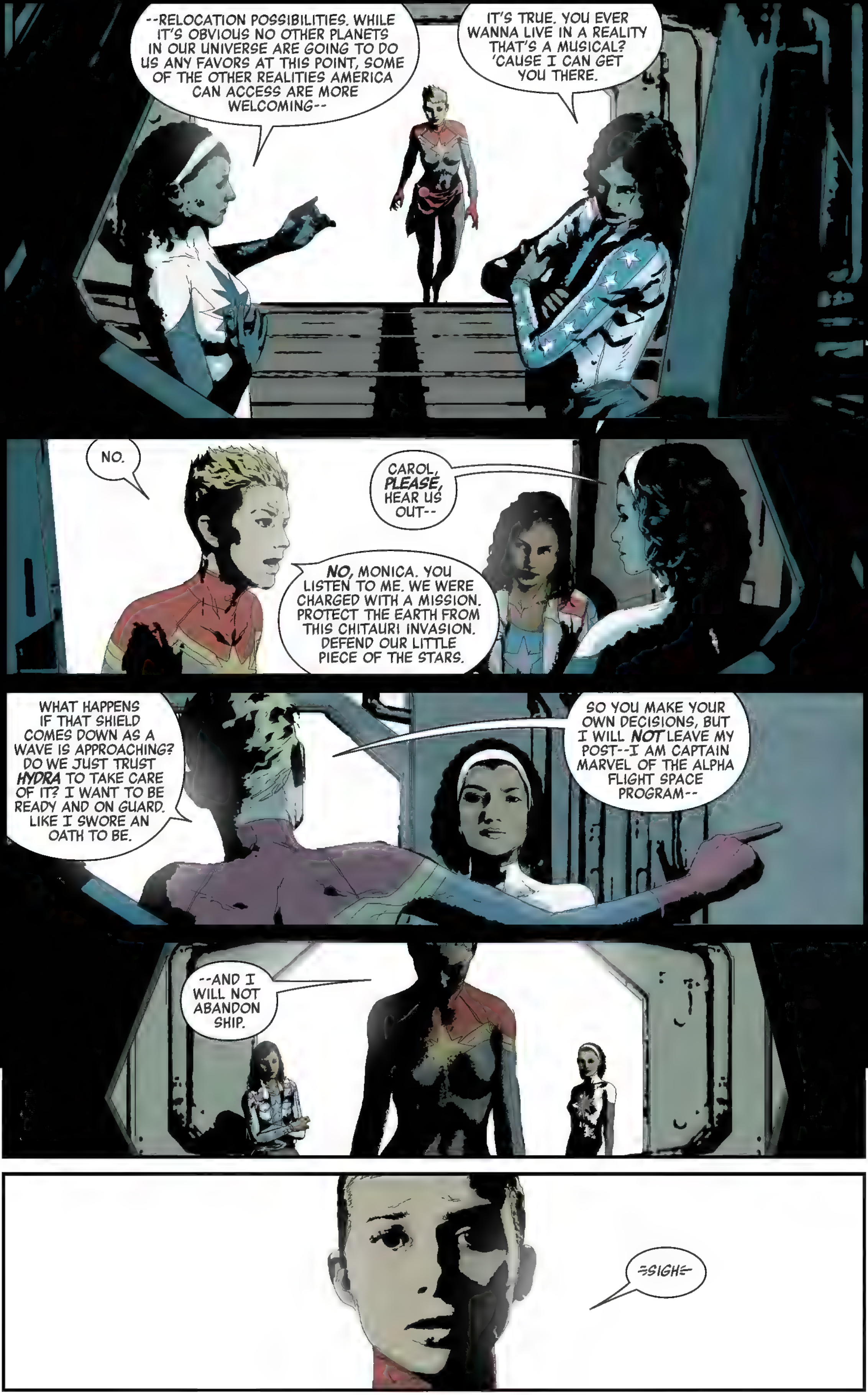
MARVEL

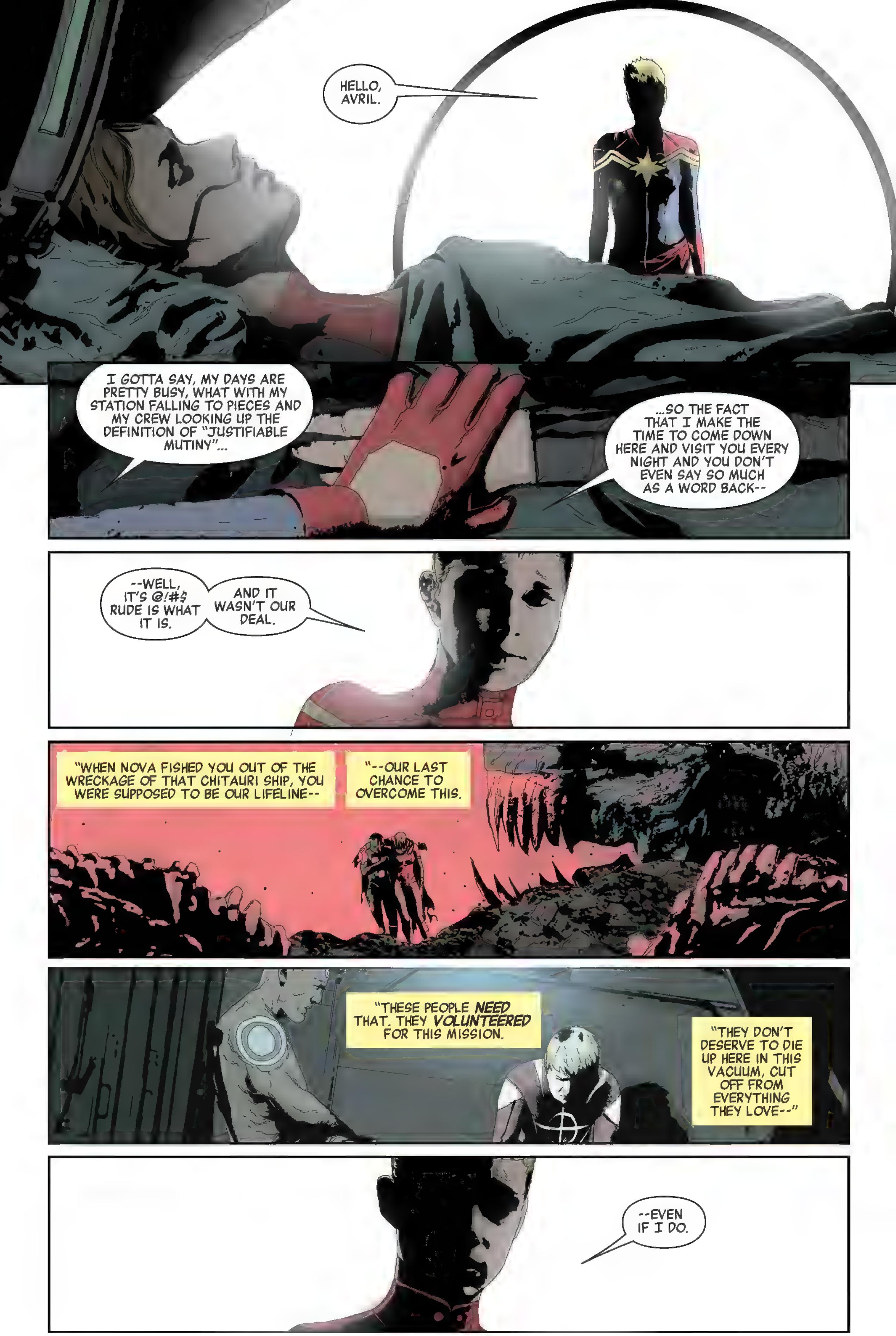
#7

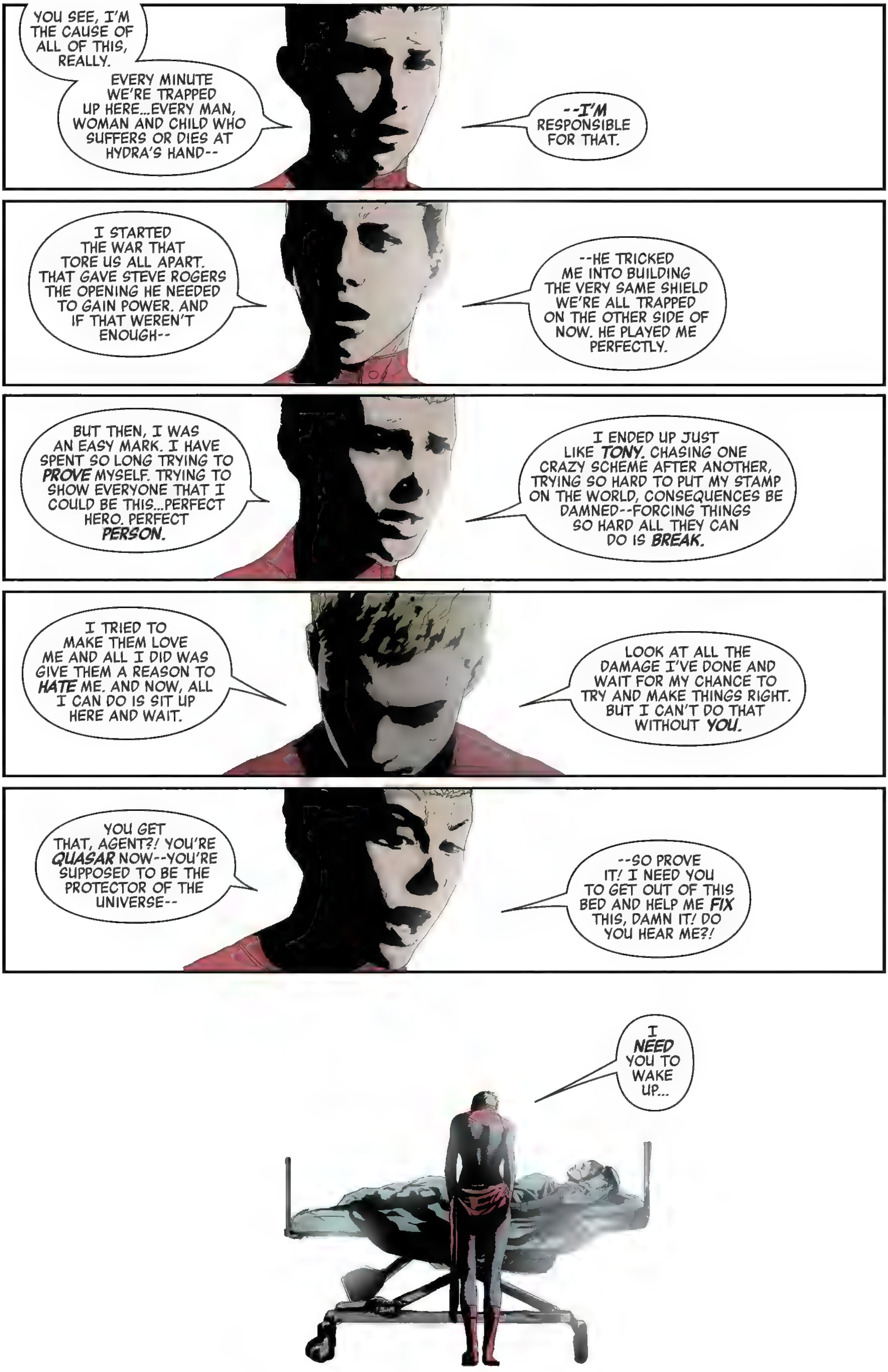


NICK SPENCER, ANDREA SORRENTINO, ROD REIS, JOSHUA CASSARA


ALPHA FLIGHT STATION. BEYOND THE PLANETARY DEFENSE SHIELD.
"YOU ASKED FOR A STATUS REPORT, CAROL--WELL, HERE IT IS.
"THERE IS NOTHING GOOD HAPPENING HERE RIGHT NOW.
"AS THE SIZE AND FREQUENCY OF THE CHITAURI WAVES CONTINUE TO INCREASE, OUR TECHNICIANS ARE RUNNING OUT OF FIXES.
"THE DAMAGE TO THE STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY OF THE BASE IS JUST TOO SEVERE.
"AND WHILE THE ANALYSTS HAVE DONE A FINE JOB PINPOINTING THE LOCATION OF THE QUEEN EGGS THAT ARE ATTRACTING THE WAVES IN FIRST PLACE--
"--WE STILL HAVE NO WAY TO GET THROUGH THE PLANETARY DEFENSE SHIELD, SO IT'S NOT A TERRIBLY USEFUL PIECE OF INFORMATION.
"THE ONLY THING RESEMBLING A BRIGHT SPOT IS AMERICA'S ABILITY TO DO INTERDIMENSIONAL SUPPLY RUNS--WHICH ACTUALLY BRINGS US TO OUR NEXT SUBJECT--"


--RELOCATION POSSIBILITIES. WHILE IT'S OBVIOUS NO OTHER PLANETS IN OUR UNIVERSE ARE GOING TO DO US ANY FAVORS AT THIS POINT, SOME OF THE OTHER REALITIES AMERICA CAN ACCESS ARE MORE WELCOMING--
IT'S TRUE. YOU EVER WANNA LIVE IN A REALITY THAT'S A MUSICAL? 'CAUSE I CAN GET YOU THERE.
NO.
CAROL, *PLEASE,* HEAR US OUT--
*NO,* MONICA. YOU LISTEN TO ME. WE WERE CHARGED WITH A MISSION. PROTECT THE EARTH FROM THIS CHITAURI INVASION. DEFEND OUR LITTLE PIECE OF THE STARS.
WHAT HAPPENS IF THAT SHIELD COMES DOWN AS A WAVE IS APPROACHING? DO WE JUST TRUST *HYDRA* TO TAKE CARE OF IT? I WANT TO BE READY AND ON GUARD. LIKE I SWORE AN OATH TO BE.
SO YOU MAKE YOUR OWN DECISIONS, BUT I WILL *NOT* LEAVE MY POST--I AM CAPTAIN MARVEL OF THE ALPHA FLIGHT SPACE PROGRAM--
--AND I WILL NOT ABANDON SHIP.
=SIGH=


HELLO, AVRIL.
I GOTTA SAY, MY DAYS ARE PRETTY BUSY, WHAT WITH MY STATION FALLING TO PIECES AND MY CREW LOOKING UP THE DEFINITION OF "JUSTIFIABLE MUTINY"...
...SO THE FACT THAT I MAKE THE TIME TO COME DOWN HERE AND VISIT YOU EVERY NIGHT AND YOU DON'T EVEN SAY SO MUCH AS A WORD BACK--
--WELL, IT'S @!#$ RUDE IS WHAT IT IS.
AND IT WASN'T OUR DEAL.
"WHEN NOVA FISHED YOU OUT OF THE WRECKAGE OF THAT CHITAURI SHIP, YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO BE OUR LIFELINE--
"--OUR LAST CHANCE TO OVERCOME THIS.
"THESE PEOPLE NEED THAT. THEY VOLUNTEERED FOR THIS MISSION.
"THEY DON'T DESERVE TO DIE UP HERE IN THIS VACUUM, CUT OFF FROM EVERYTHING THEY LOVE--"
--EVEN IF I DO.


YOU SEE, I'M THE CAUSE OF ALL OF THIS, REALLY.
EVERY MINUTE WE'RE TRAPPED UP HERE...EVERY MAN, WOMAN AND CHILD WHO SUFFERS OR DIES AT HYDRA'S HAND--
--I'M RESPONSIBLE FOR THAT.
I STARTED THE WAR THAT TORE US ALL APART. THAT GAVE STEVE ROGERS THE OPENING HE NEEDED TO GAIN POWER. AND IF THAT WEREN'T ENOUGH--
--HE TRICKED ME INTO BUILDING THE VERY SAME SHIELD WE'RE ALL TRAPPED ON THE OTHER SIDE OF NOW. HE PLAYED ME PERFECTLY.
BUT THEN, I WAS AN EASY MARK. I HAVE SPENT SO LONG TRYING TO ***PROVE*** MYSELF. TRYING TO SHOW EVERYONE THAT I COULD BE THIS...PERFECT HERO. PERFECT ***PERSON.***
I ENDED UP JUST LIKE ***TONY.*** CHASING ONE CRAZY SCHEME AFTER ANOTHER, TRYING SO HARD TO PUT MY STAMP ON THE WORLD, CONSEQUENCES BE DAMNED--FORCING THINGS SO HARD ALL THEY CAN DO IS ***BREAK.***
I TRIED TO MAKE THEM LOVE ME AND ALL I DID WAS GIVE THEM A REASON TO ***HATE*** ME. AND NOW, ALL I CAN DO IS SIT UP HERE AND WAIT.
LOOK AT ALL THE DAMAGE I'VE DONE AND WAIT FOR MY CHANCE TO TRY AND MAKE THINGS RIGHT. BUT I CAN'T DO THAT WITHOUT ***YOU.***
YOU GET THAT, AGENT?! YOU'RE ***QUASAR*** NOW--YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE THE PROTECTOR OF THE UNIVERSE--
--SO PROVE IT! I NEED YOU TO GET OUT OF THIS BED AND HELP ME ***FIX*** THIS, DAMN IT! DO YOU HEAR ME?!
I ***NEED*** YOU TO WAKE UP...

# SECRET EMPIRE

Steve Rogers, a.k.a. Captain America, has claimed the United States for Hydra. With most of Earth's heroes trapped in the Darkforce bubble surrounding Manhattan or stranded behind the Planetary Defense Shield, his power seems absolute.

Black Widow believes that the only way to stop Captain America is to kill him. Recently, her team of young heroes helped her liberate a mysterious old man from a Hydra prison--a man Widow claims can win them the war.

Meanwhile, Tony Stark hoped to save Captain America by reassembling the Cosmic Cube that rewrote Steve's history in the first place. But when Ant-Man tipped Hydra off to the location of the Underground's base in exchange for his daughter's life, Steve showed up with an army--and a temporarily resurrected Hulk.

Captain America routed the Underground and claimed their cube fragments, but at a terrible cost: his beloved Madame Hydra sacrificed herself to save him from the Mount's destruction. And with the members of the Underground presumed dead, there's nothing to stop Widow from going for the kill.

WRITER ▪ NICK SPENCER ARTIST ▪ ANDREA SORRENTINO
ADDITIONAL ART ▪ ROD REIS; JOSHUA CASSARA & RACHELLE ROSENBERG
LETTERER ▪ VC'S TRAVIS LANHAM
RECAP PAGE ART ▪ ANDREA SORRENTINO
COVER ▪ MARK BROOKS
VARIANT COVERS ▪ DAN MORA & EDGAR DELGADO; ANDREA SORRENTINO; JOHN TYLER CHRISTOPHER

PRODUCTION DESIGN ▪ CARLOS LAO ASSISTANT EDITOR ▪ ALANNA SMITH
EDITOR ▪ TOM BREVOORT EDITOR IN CHIEF ▪ AXEL ALONSO
CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER ▪ JOE QUESADA PRESIDENT ▪ DAN BUCKLEY
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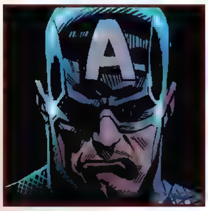
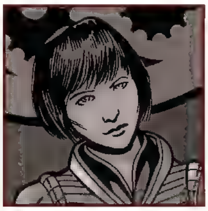
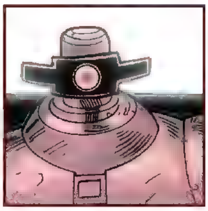
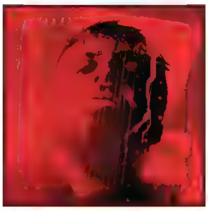
## Hydra

Hydra Command

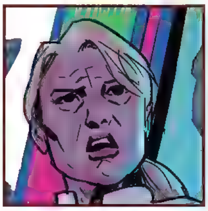

Captain America


Madame Hydra

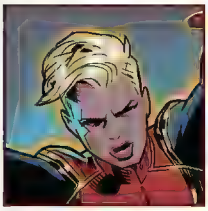

Arnim Zola

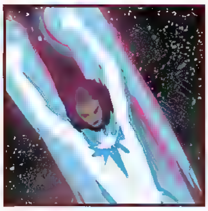

Punisher

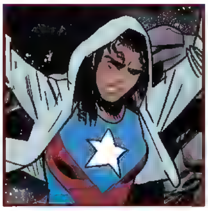
Captured

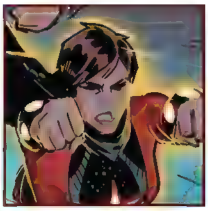

Sharon Carter

## Beyond the Shield

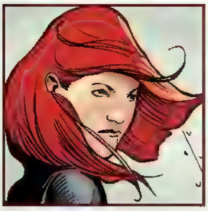

Captain Marvel

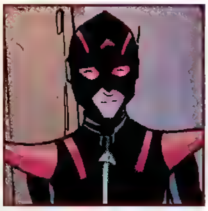

Spectrum

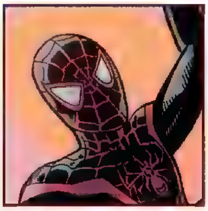

America Chavez

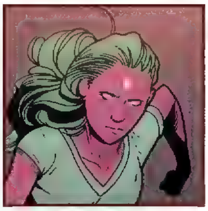

Quasar

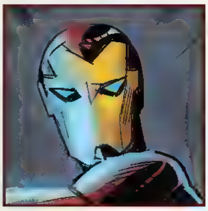
## The Red Room

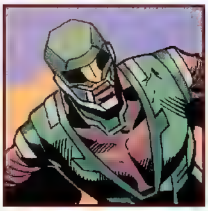

Black Widow

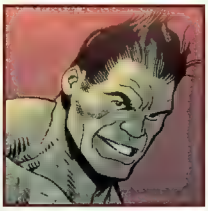

Wasp


Spider-Man

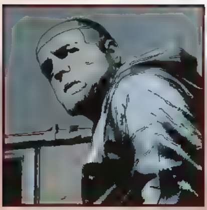

Viv Vision

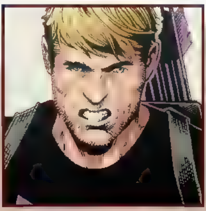

Ironheart

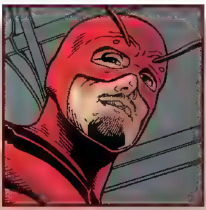

Falcon

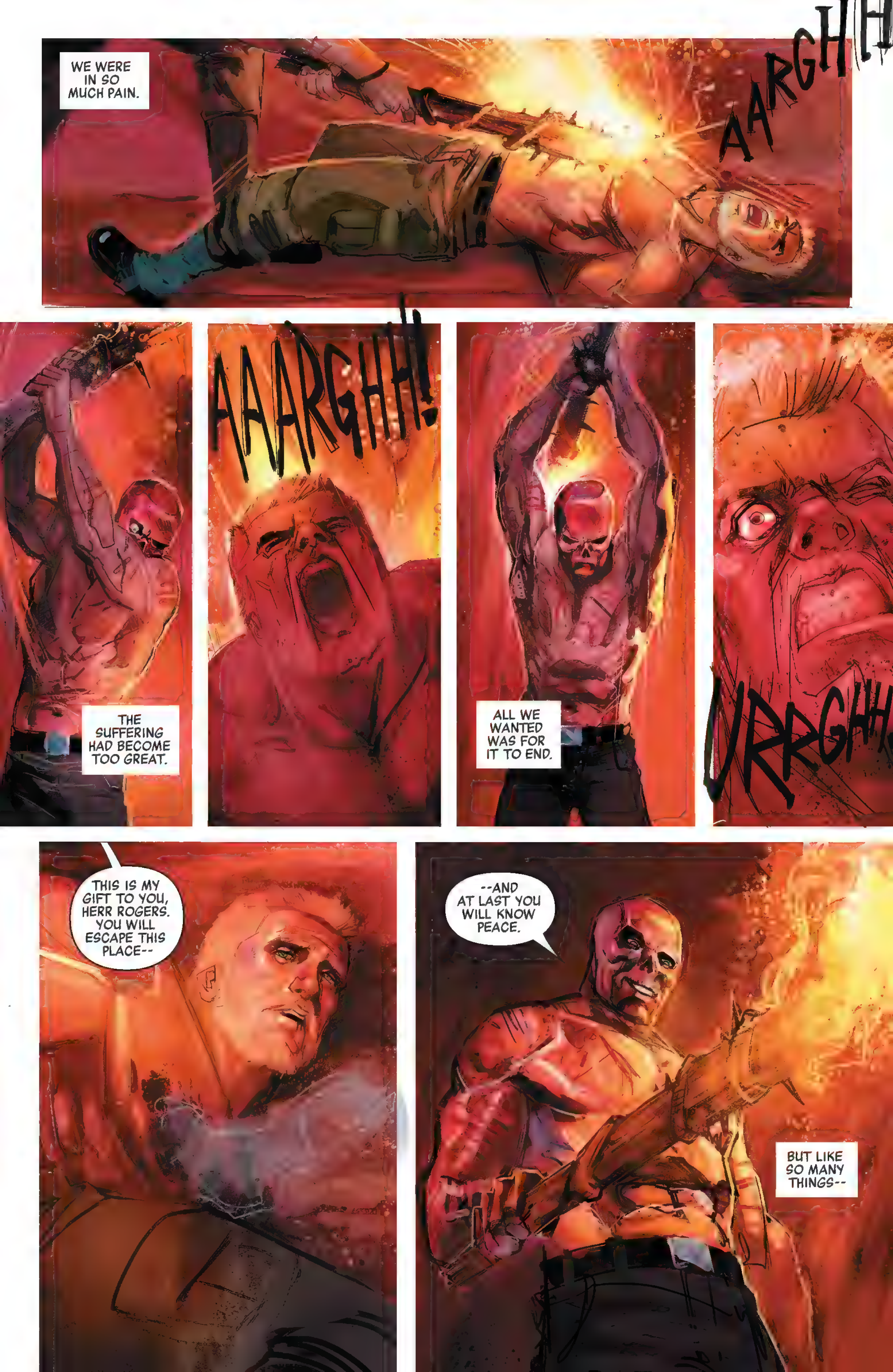

Hulk (Amadeus Cho)

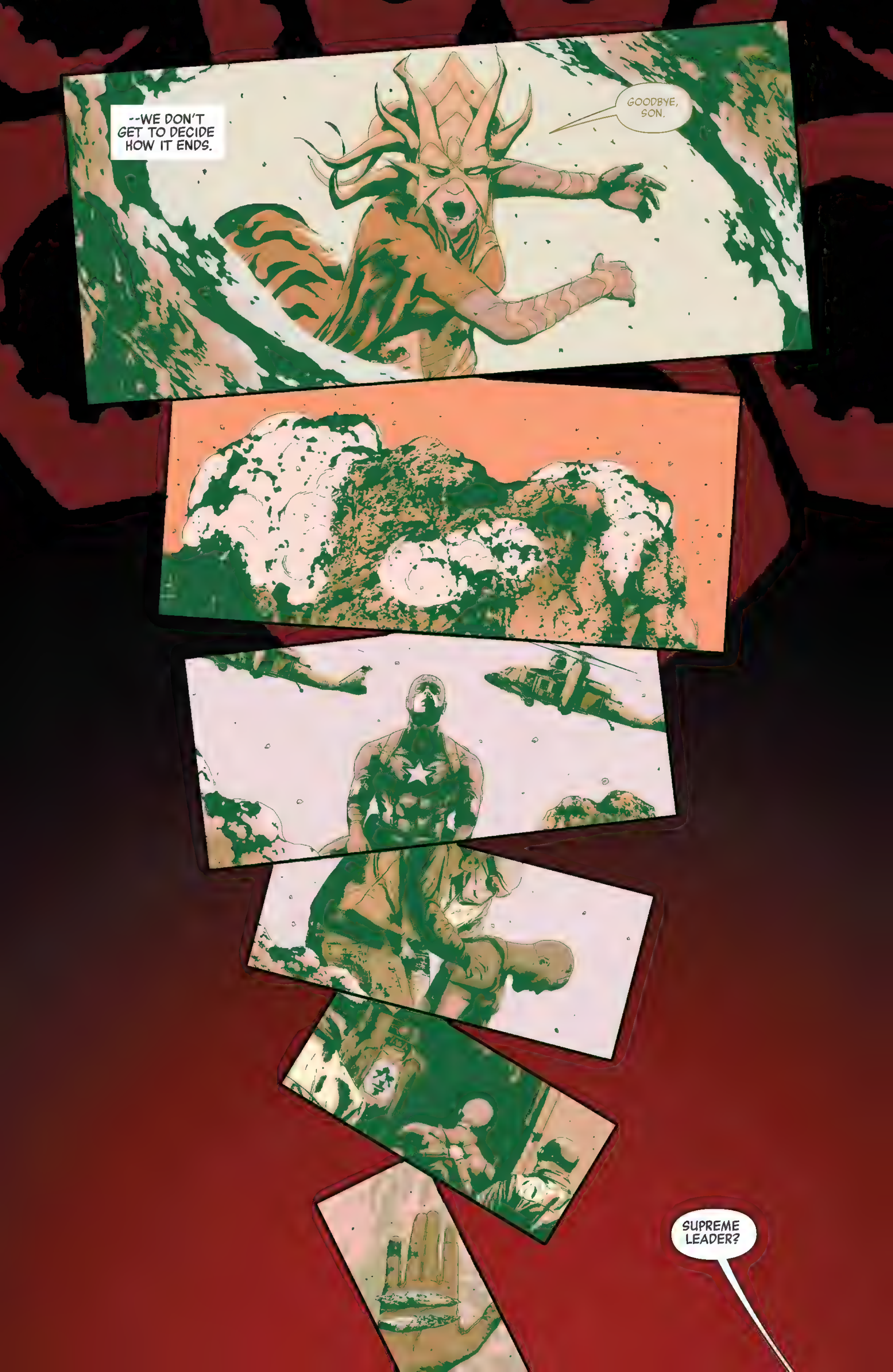
## The Underground

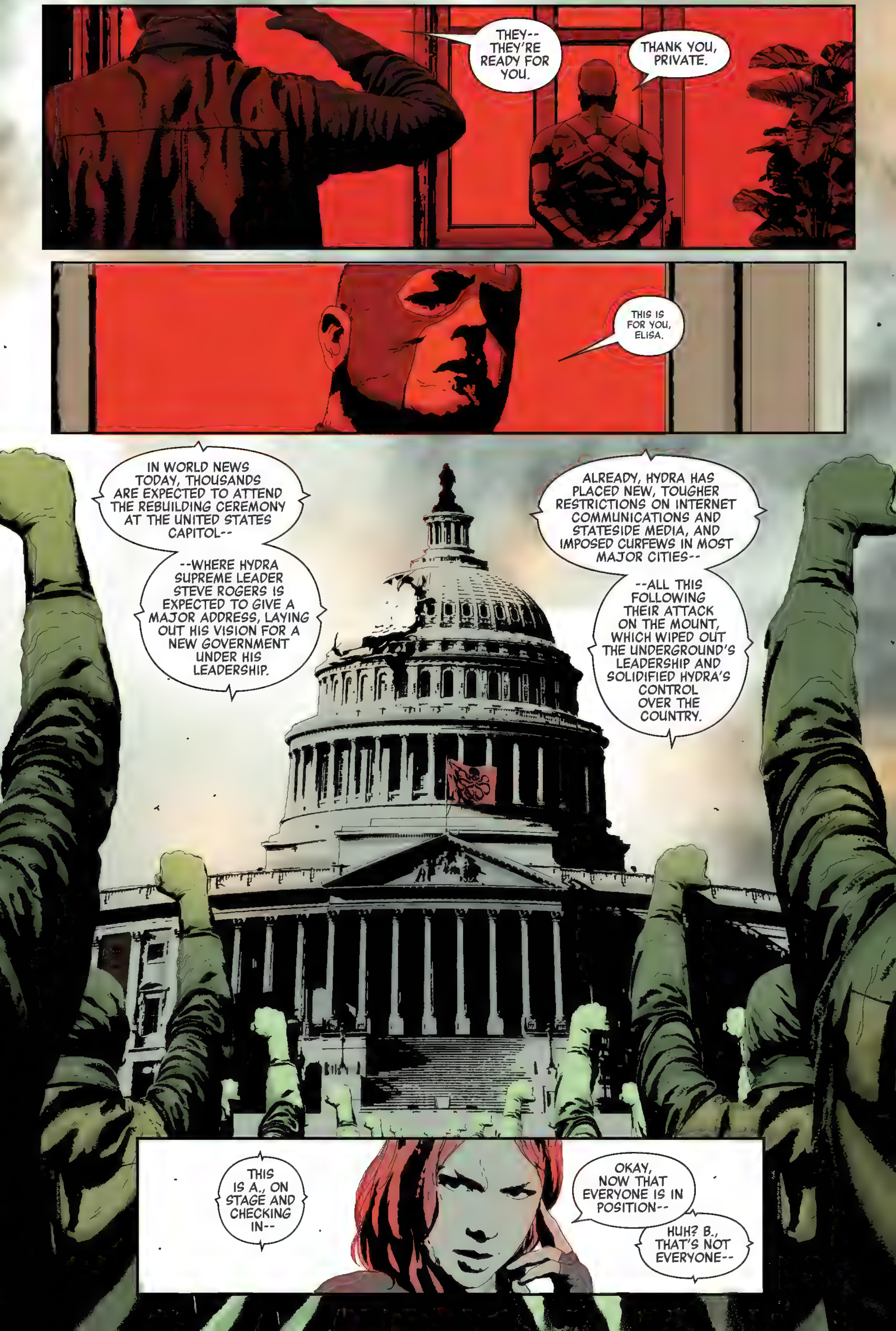

Sam Wilson

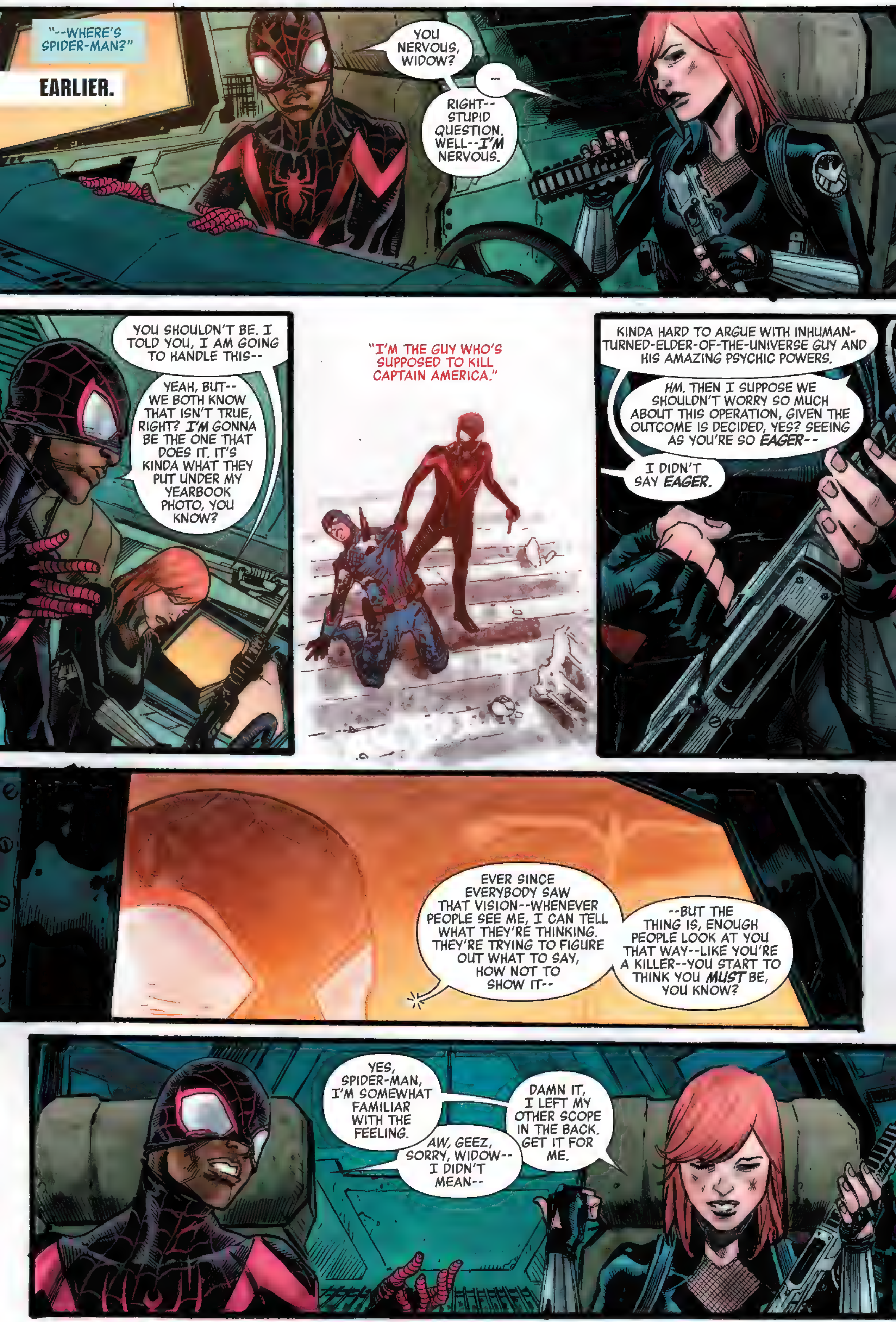

Hawkeye

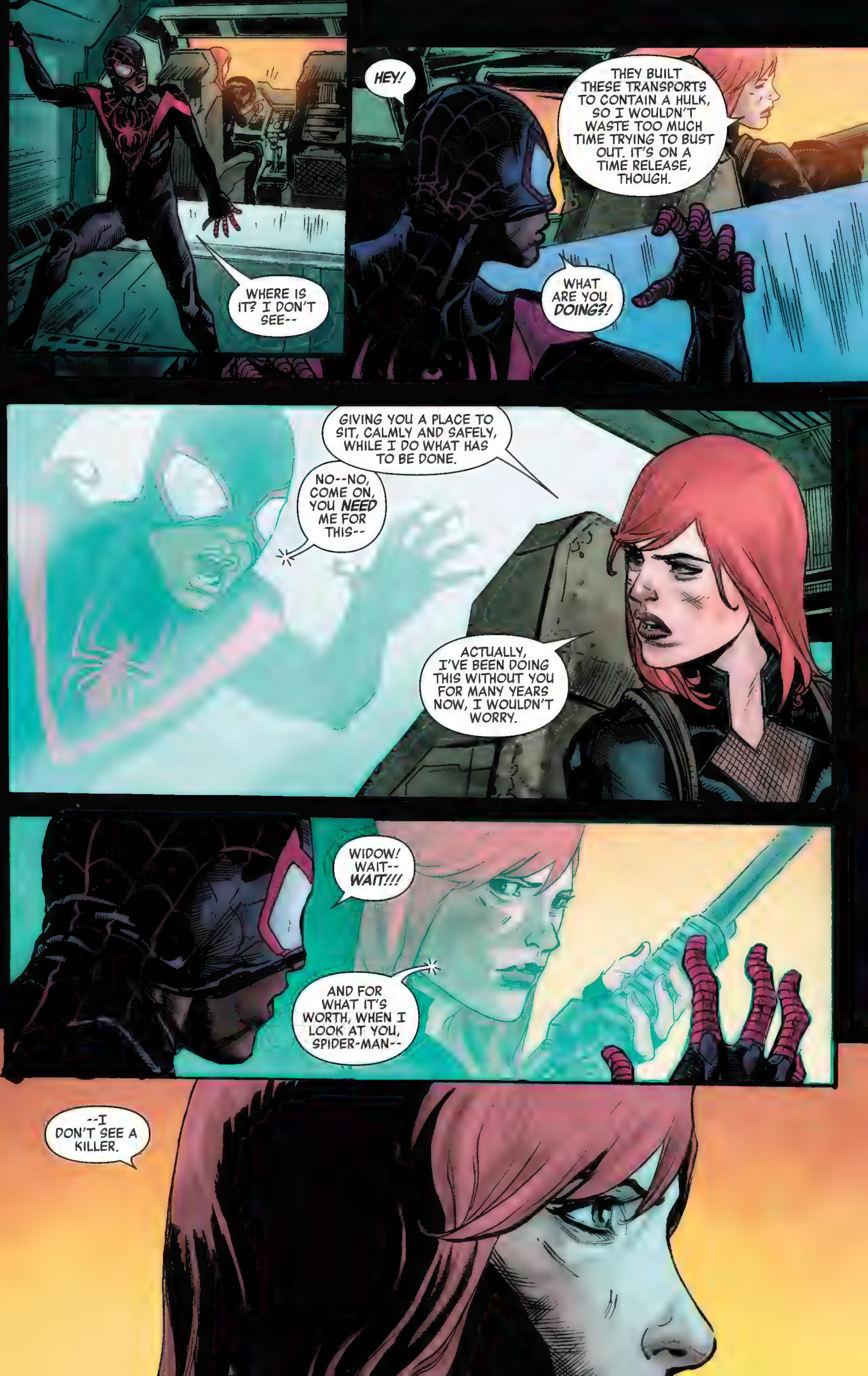

Giant-Man

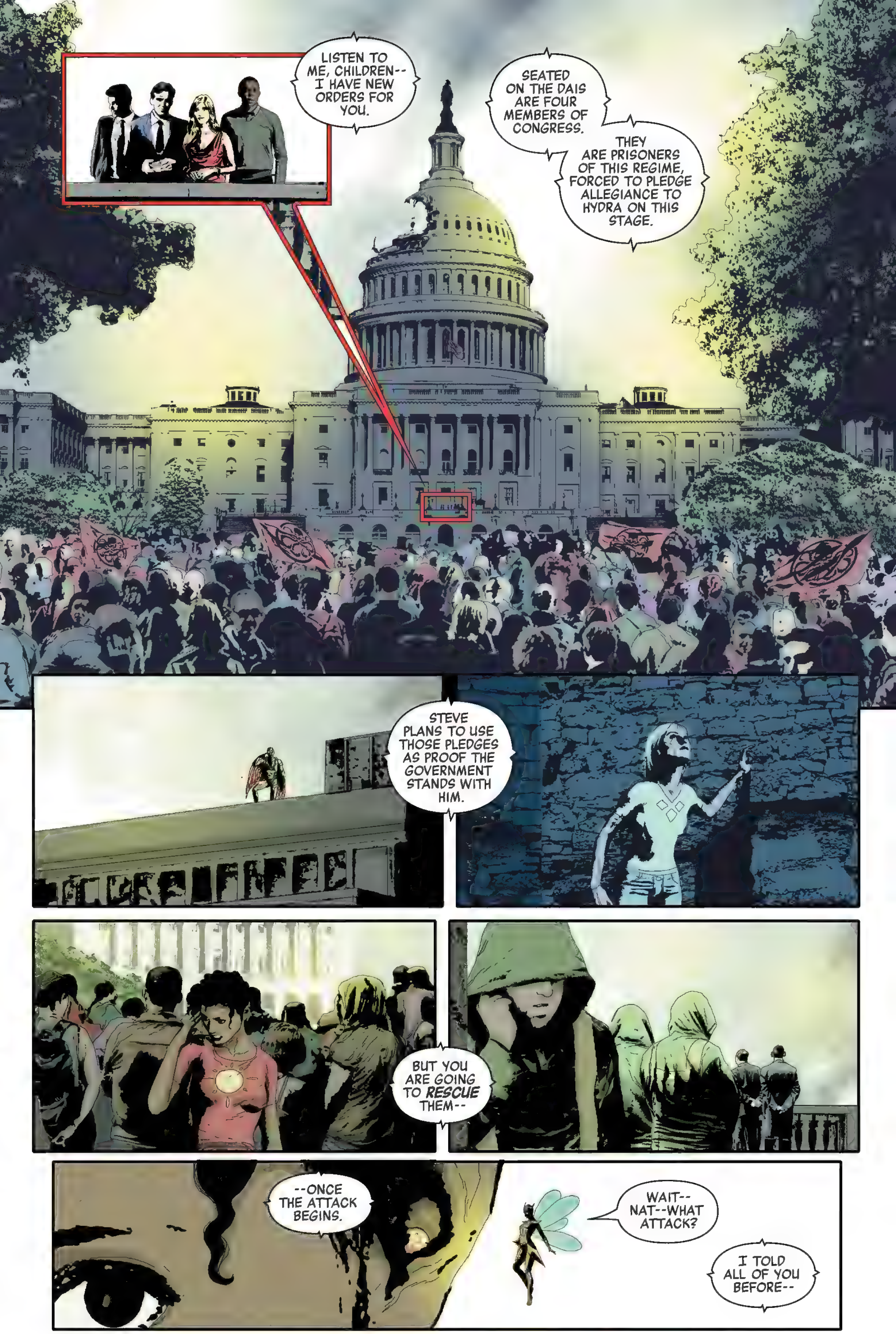

WE WERE IN SO MUCH PAIN.
AARGHHH
THE SUFFERING HAD BECOME TOO GREAT.
AAARGHHH!
ALL WE WANTED WAS FOR IT TO END.
URRGHH
THIS IS MY GIFT TO YOU, HERR ROGERS. YOU WILL ESCAPE THIS PLACE--
--AND AT LAST YOU WILL KNOW PEACE.
BUT LIKE SO MANY THINGS--

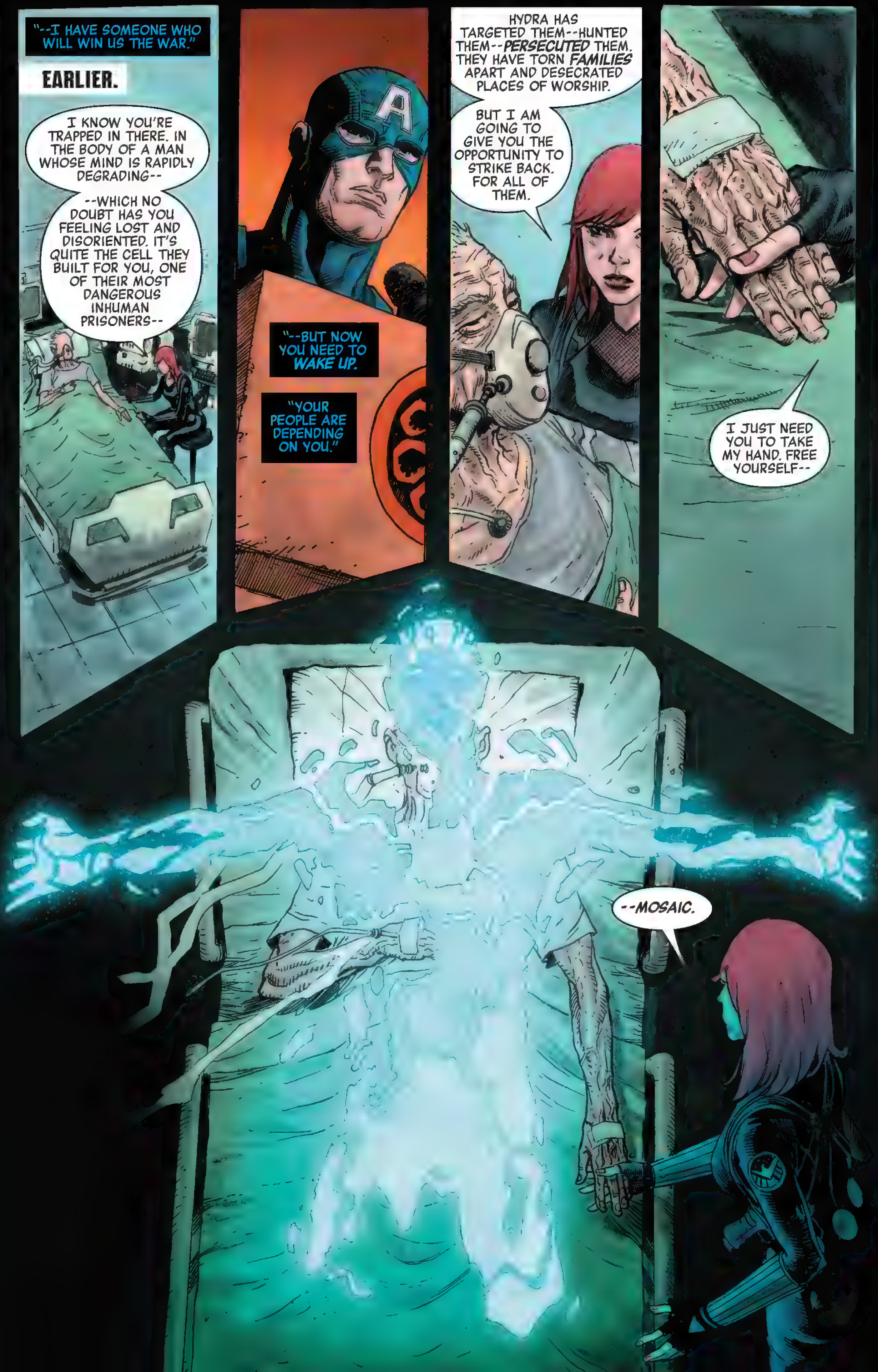

--WE DON'T GET TO DECIDE HOW IT ENDS.
GOODBYE, SON.
SUPREME LEADER?

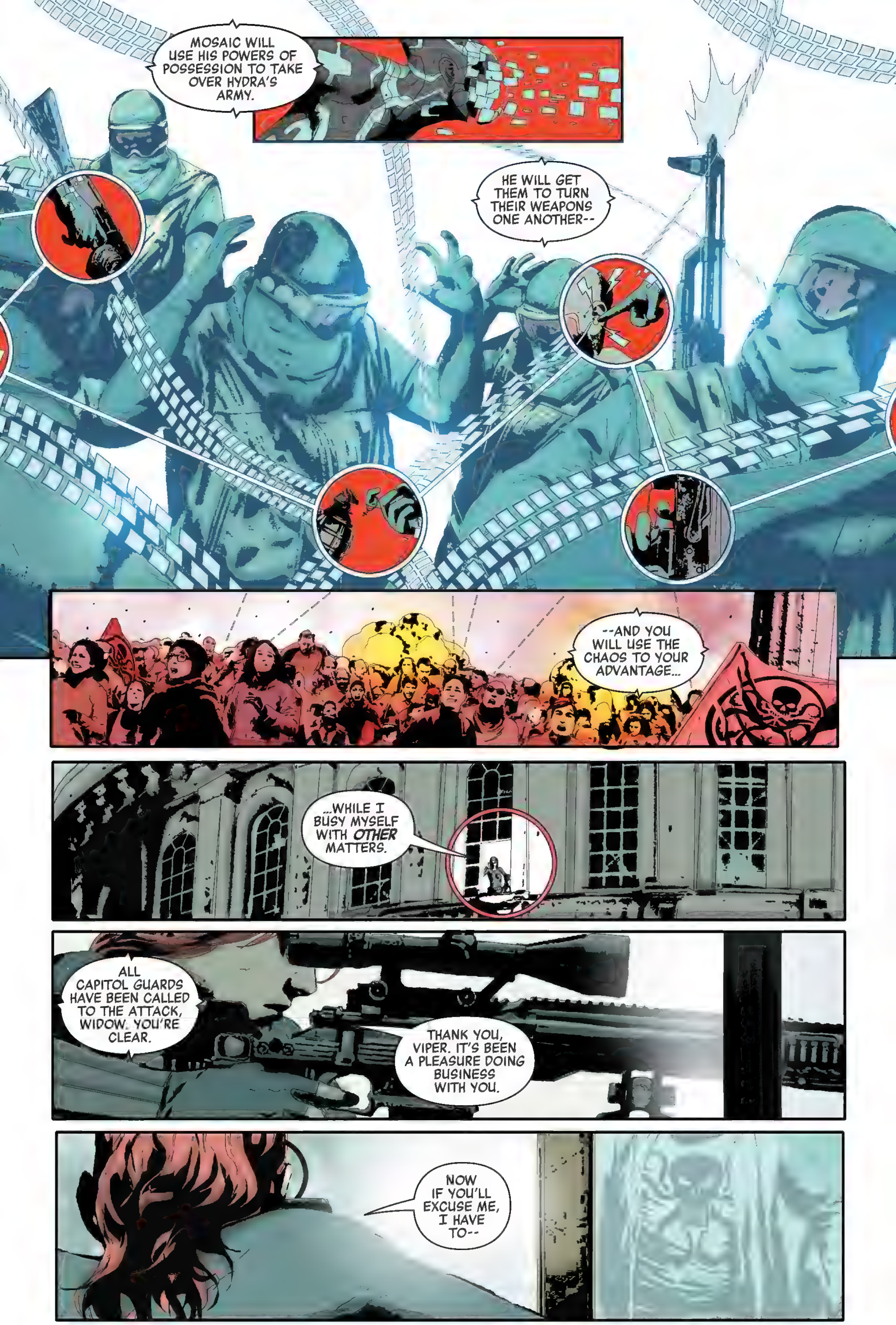

THEY-- THEY'RE READY FOR YOU.
THANK YOU, PRIVATE.
THIS IS FOR YOU, ELISA.
IN WORLD NEWS TODAY, THOUSANDS ARE EXPECTED TO ATTEND THE REBUILDING CEREMONY AT THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL--
--WHERE HYDRA SUPREME LEADER STEVE ROGERS IS EXPECTED TO GIVE A MAJOR ADDRESS, LAYING OUT HIS VISION FOR A NEW GOVERNMENT UNDER HIS LEADERSHIP.
ALREADY, HYDRA HAS PLACED NEW, TOUGHER RESTRICTIONS ON INTERNET COMMUNICATIONS AND STATESIDE MEDIA, AND IMPOSED CURFEWS IN MOST MAJOR CITIES--
--ALL THIS FOLLOWING THEIR ATTACK ON THE MOUNT, WHICH WIPED OUT THE UNDERGROUND'S LEADERSHIP AND SOLIDIFIED HYDRA'S CONTROL OVER THE COUNTRY.
THIS IS A., ON STAGE AND CHECKING IN--
OKAY, NOW THAT EVERYONE IS IN POSITION--
HUH? B., THAT'S NOT EVERYONE--

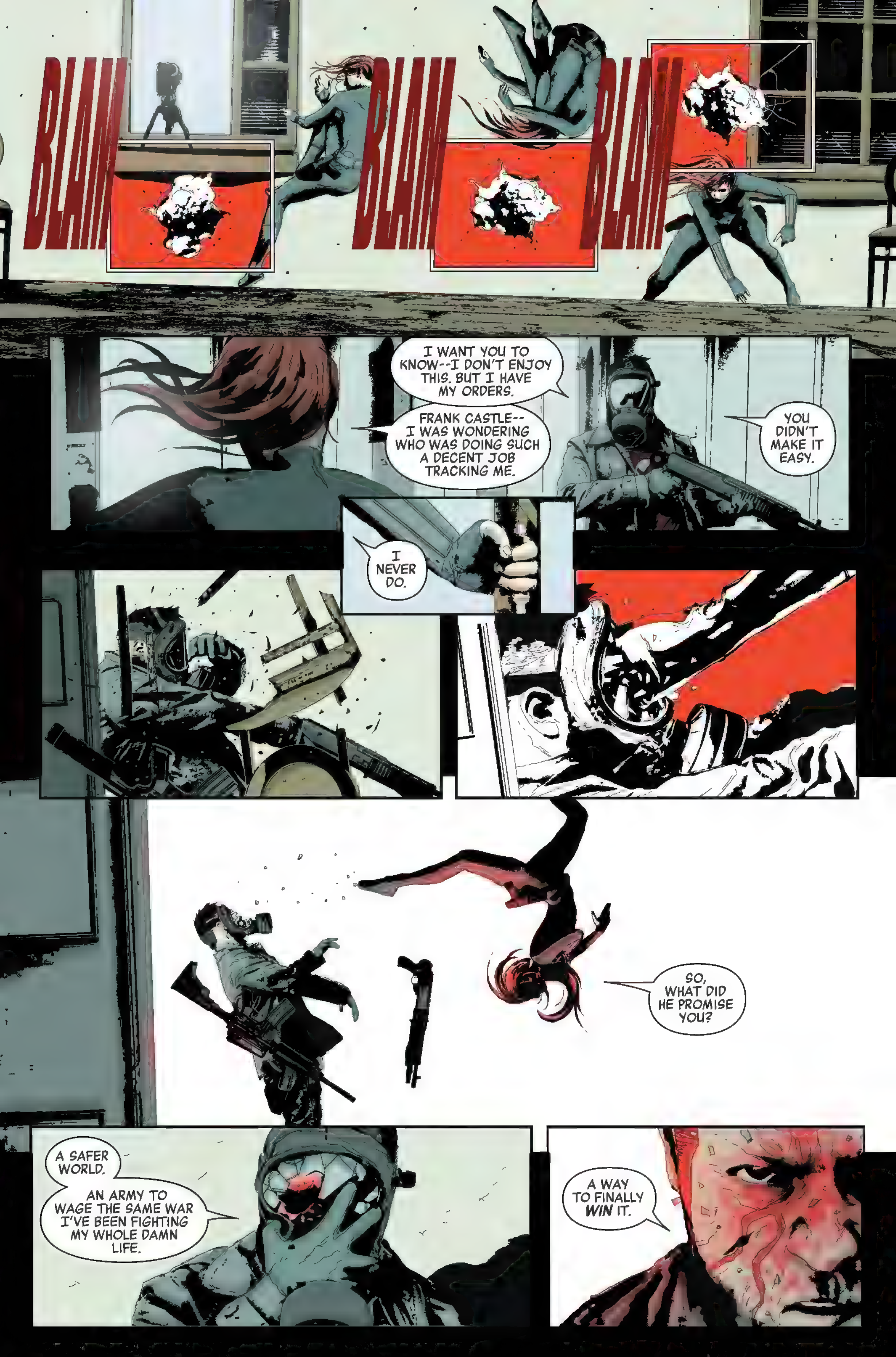

"--WHERE'S SPIDER-MAN?"
EARLIER.
YOU NERVOUS, WIDOW?
...
RIGHT-- STUPID QUESTION. WELL--*I'M* NERVOUS.
YOU SHOULDN'T BE. I TOLD YOU, I AM GOING TO HANDLE THIS--
YEAH, BUT-- WE BOTH KNOW THAT ISN'T TRUE, RIGHT? *I'M* GONNA BE THE ONE THAT DOES IT. IT'S KINDA WHAT THEY PUT UNDER MY YEARBOOK PHOTO, YOU KNOW?
"I'M THE GUY WHO'S SUPPOSED TO KILL CAPTAIN AMERICA."
KINDA HARD TO ARGUE WITH INHUMAN-TURNED-ELDER-OF-THE-UNIVERSE GUY AND HIS AMAZING PSYCHIC POWERS.
HM. THEN I SUPPOSE WE SHOULDN'T WORRY SO MUCH ABOUT THIS OPERATION, GIVEN THE OUTCOME IS DECIDED, YES? SEEING AS YOU'RE SO *EAGER--*
I DIDN'T SAY *EAGER.*
EVER SINCE EVERYBODY SAW THAT VISION--WHENEVER PEOPLE SEE ME, I CAN TELL WHAT THEY'RE THINKING. THEY'RE TRYING TO FIGURE OUT WHAT TO SAY, HOW NOT TO SHOW IT--
--BUT THE THING IS, ENOUGH PEOPLE LOOK AT YOU THAT WAY--LIKE YOU'RE A KILLER--YOU START TO THINK YOU *MUST* BE, YOU KNOW?
YES, SPIDER-MAN, I'M SOMEWHAT FAMILIAR WITH THE FEELING.
AW, GEEZ, SORRY, WIDOW-- I DIDN'T MEAN--
DAMN IT, I LEFT MY OTHER SCOPE IN THE BACK. GET IT FOR ME.

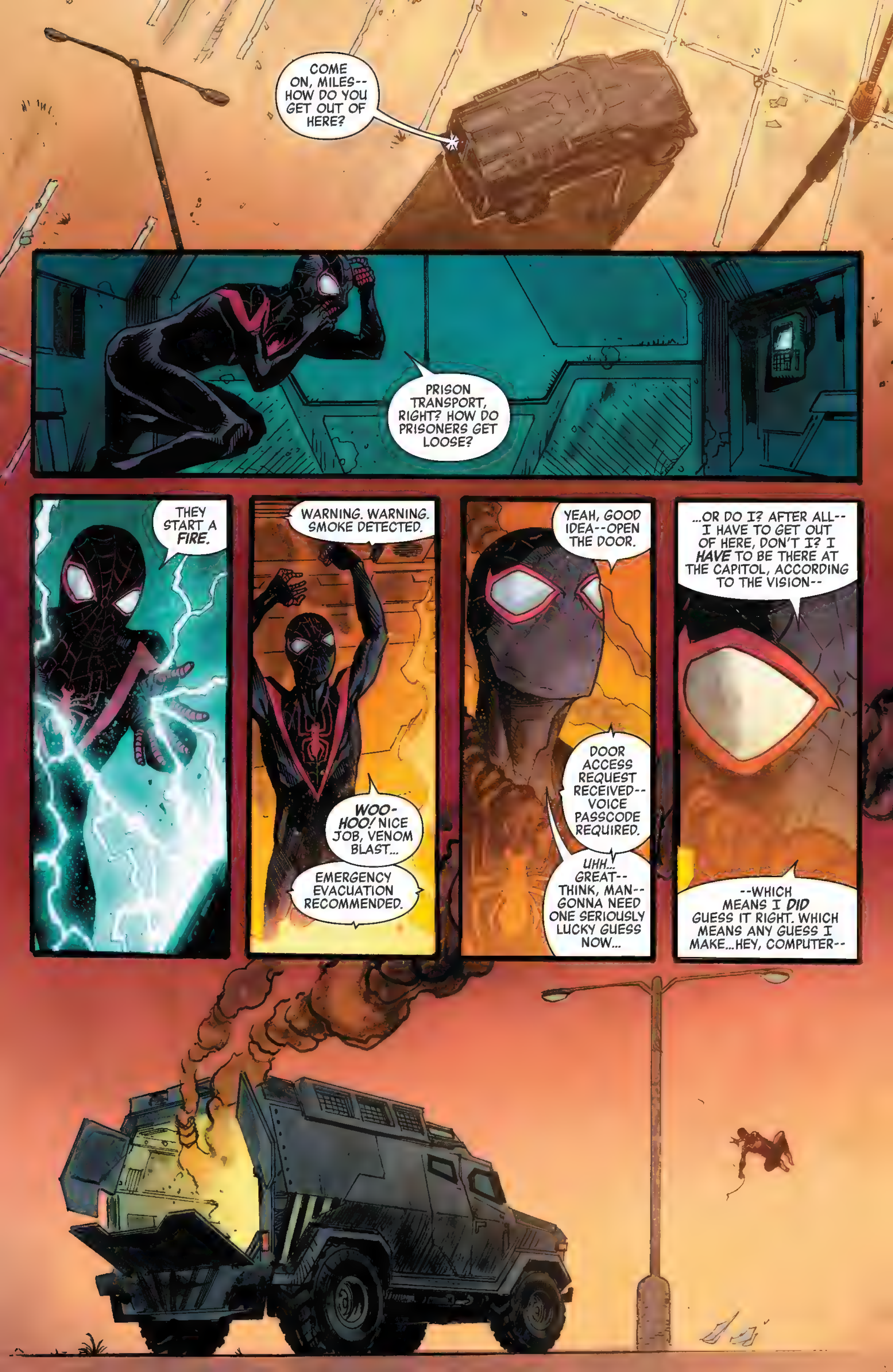

WHERE IS IT? I DON'T SEE--
HEY!
THEY BUILT THESE TRANSPORTS TO CONTAIN A HULK, SO I WOULDN'T WASTE TOO MUCH TIME TRYING TO BUST OUT. IT'S ON A TIME RELEASE, THOUGH.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
GIVING YOU A PLACE TO SIT, CALMLY AND SAFELY, WHILE I DO WHAT HAS TO BE DONE.
NO--NO, COME ON, YOU NEED ME FOR THIS--
ACTUALLY, I'VE BEEN DOING THIS WITHOUT YOU FOR MANY YEARS NOW, I WOULDN'T WORRY.
WIDOW! WAIT-- WAIT!!!
AND FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH, WHEN I LOOK AT YOU, SPIDER-MAN--
--I DON'T SEE A KILLER.

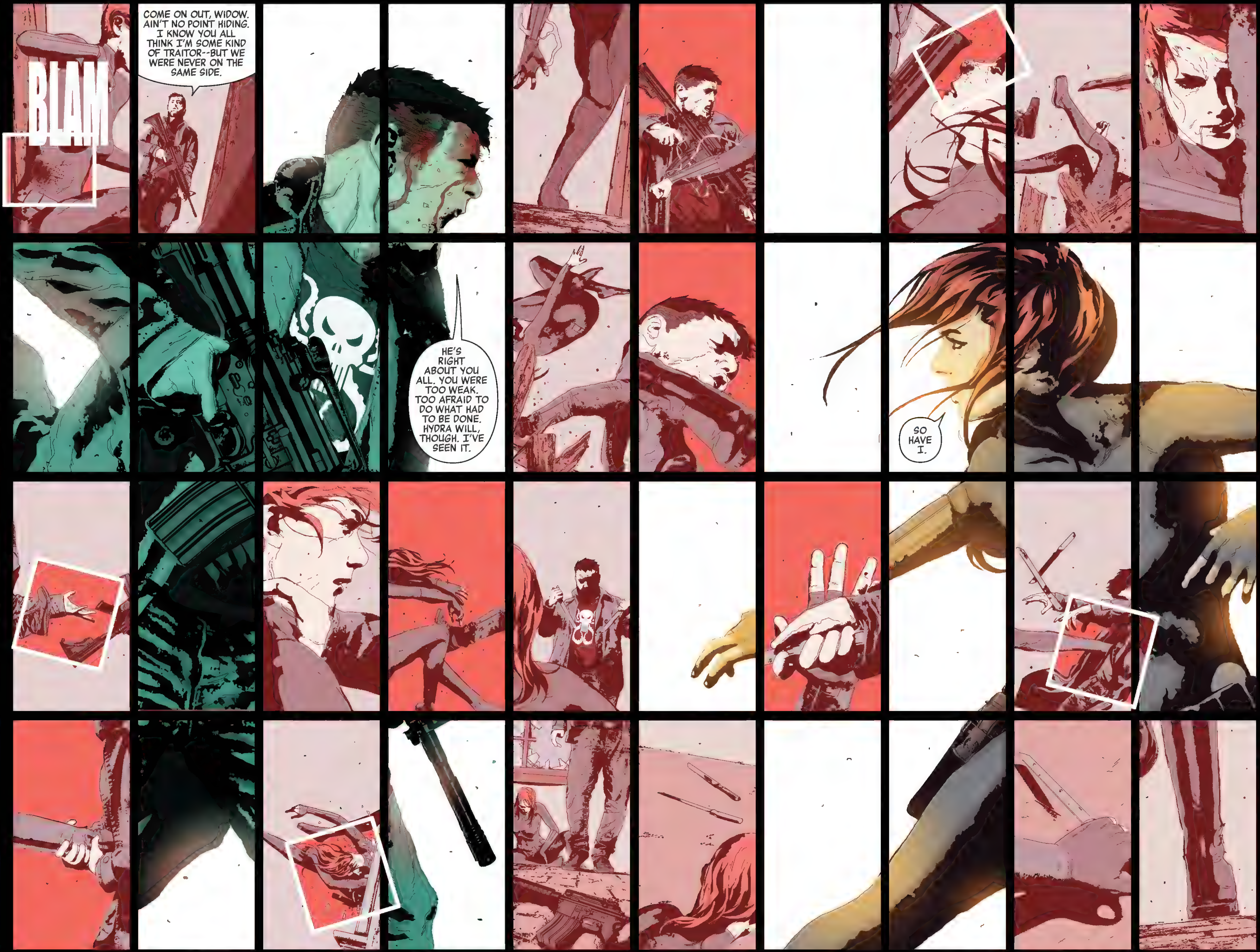

LISTEN TO ME, CHILDREN-- I HAVE NEW ORDERS FOR YOU.
SEATED ON THE DAIS ARE FOUR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS.
THEY ARE PRISONERS OF THIS REGIME, FORCED TO PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE TO HYDRA ON THIS STAGE.
STEVE PLANS TO USE THOSE PLEDGES AS PROOF THE GOVERNMENT STANDS WITH HIM.
BUT YOU ARE GOING TO *RESCUE* THEM--
--ONCE THE ATTACK BEGINS.
WAIT-- NAT--WHAT ATTACK?
I TOLD ALL OF YOU BEFORE--

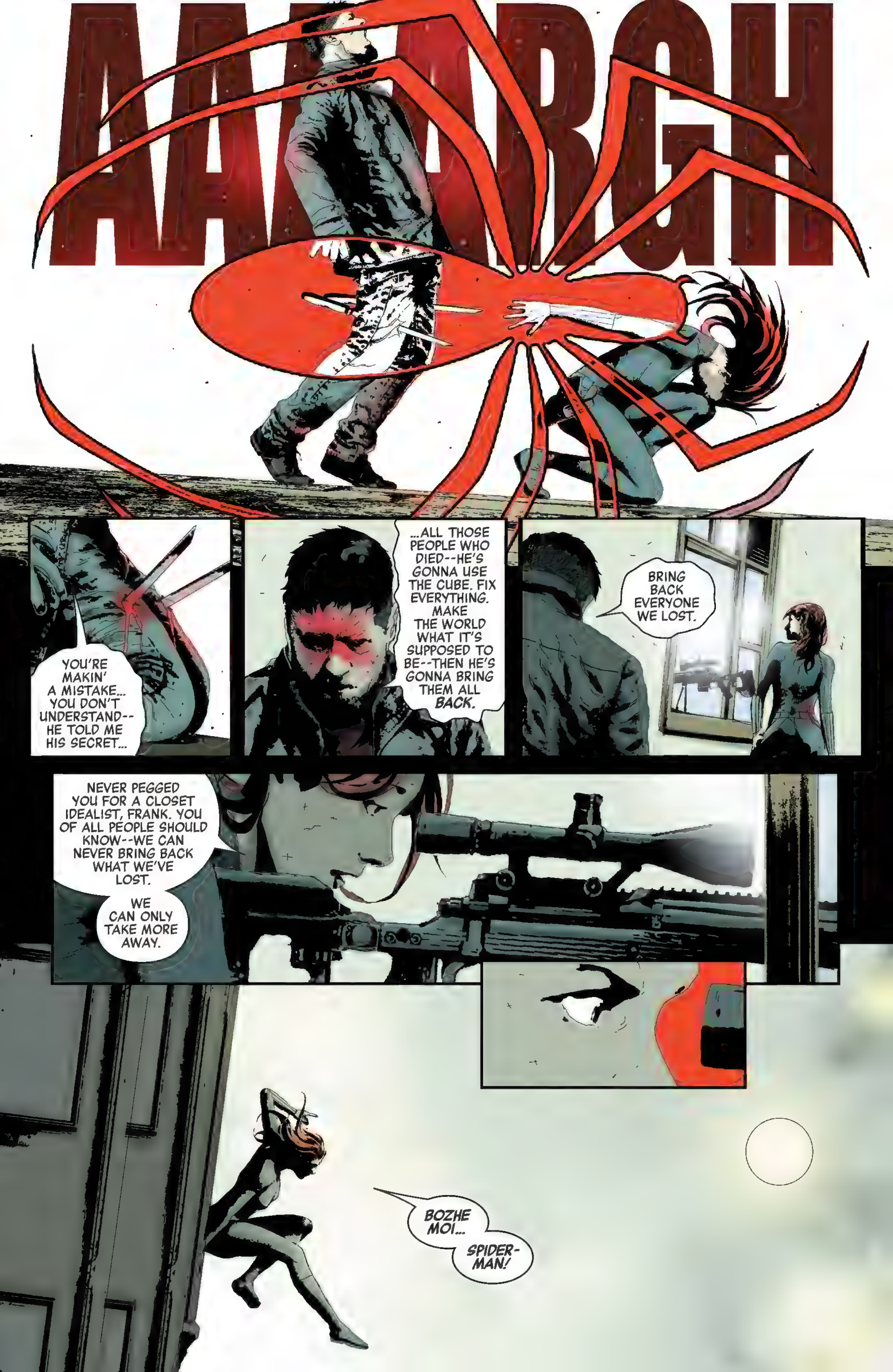

"--I HAVE SOMEONE WHO WILL WIN US THE WAR."
EARLIER.
I KNOW YOU'RE TRAPPED IN THERE. IN THE BODY OF A MAN WHOSE MIND IS RAPIDLY DEGRADING--
--WHICH NO DOUBT HAS YOU FEELING LOST AND DISORIENTED. IT'S QUITE THE CELL THEY BUILT FOR YOU, ONE OF THEIR MOST DANGEROUS INHUMAN PRISONERS--
"--BUT NOW YOU NEED TO *WAKE UP.*
"YOUR PEOPLE ARE DEPENDING ON YOU."
HYDRA HAS TARGETED THEM--HUNTED THEM--*PERSECUTED* THEM. THEY HAVE TORN *FAMILIES* APART AND DESECRATED PLACES OF WORSHIP.
BUT I AM GOING TO GIVE YOU THE OPPORTUNITY TO STRIKE BACK. FOR ALL OF THEM.
I JUST NEED YOU TO TAKE MY HAND. FREE YOURSELF--
--*MOSAIC.*

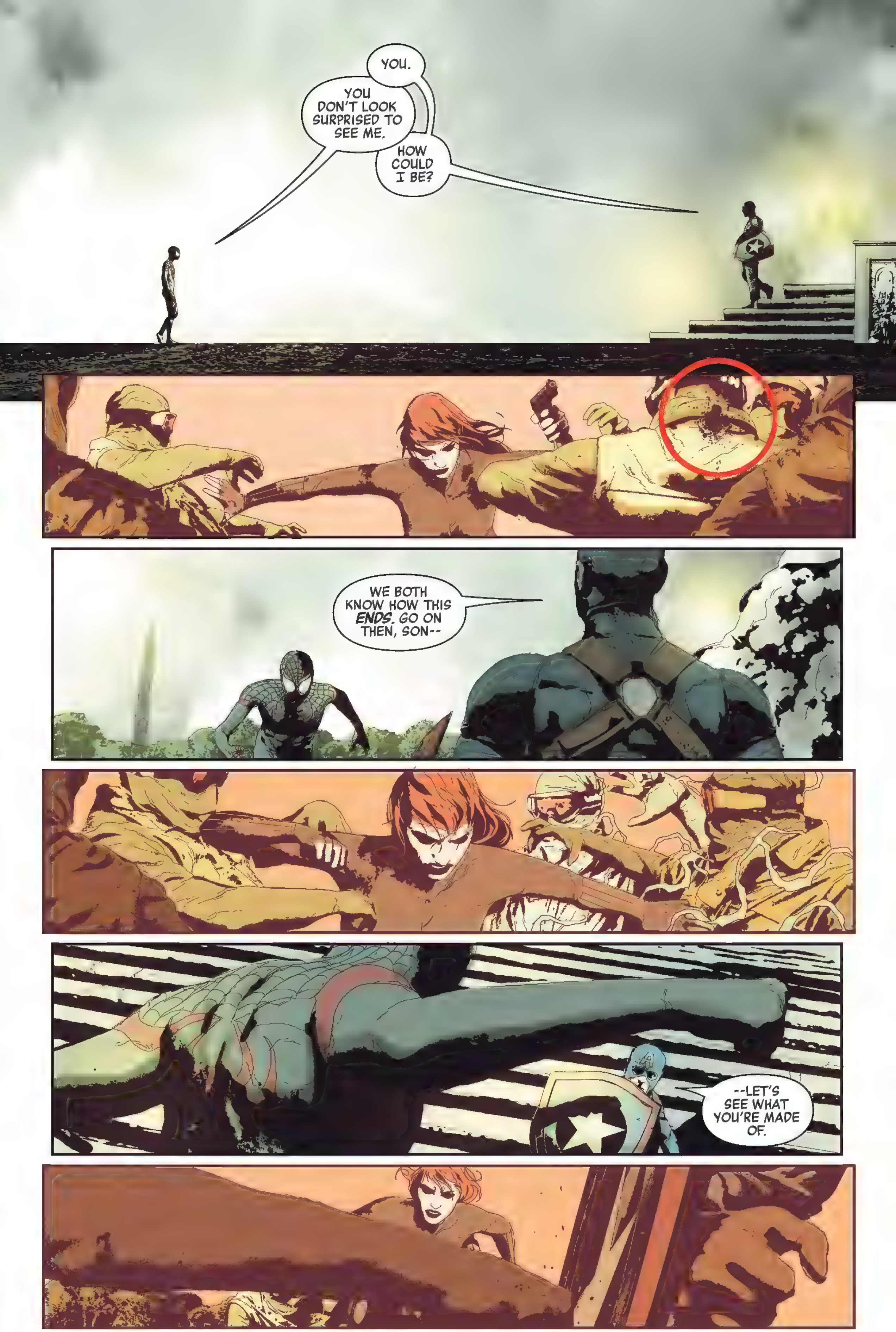

MOSAIC WILL USE HIS POWERS OF POSSESSION TO TAKE OVER HYDRA'S ARMY.
HE WILL GET THEM TO TURN THEIR WEAPONS ONE ANOTHER--
--AND YOU WILL USE THE CHAOS TO YOUR ADVANTAGE...
...WHILE I BUSY MYSELF WITH *OTHER* MATTERS.
ALL CAPITOL GUARDS HAVE BEEN CALLED TO THE ATTACK, WIDOW. YOU'RE CLEAR.
THANK YOU, VIPER. IT'S BEEN A PLEASURE DOING BUSINESS WITH YOU.
NOW IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, I HAVE TO--

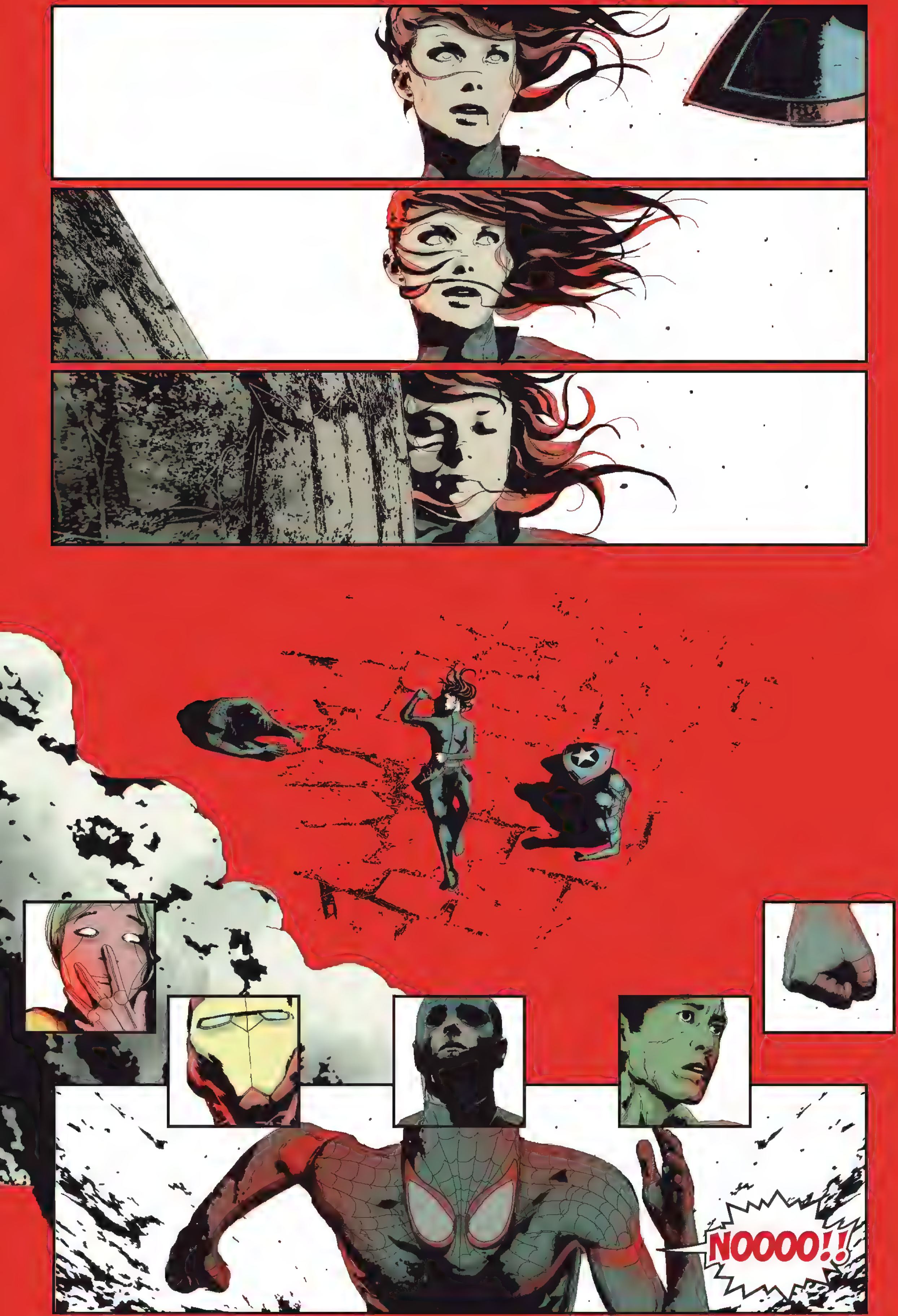

BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
I WANT YOU TO KNOW--I DON'T ENJOY THIS. BUT I HAVE MY ORDERS.
FRANK CASTLE-- I WAS WONDERING WHO WAS DOING SUCH A DECENT JOB TRACKING ME.
YOU DIDN'T MAKE IT EASY.
I NEVER DO.
SO, WHAT DID HE PROMISE YOU?
A SAFER WORLD.
AN ARMY TO WAGE THE SAME WAR I'VE BEEN FIGHTING MY WHOLE DAMN LIFE.
A WAY TO FINALLY *WIN* IT.


COME ON, MILES-- HOW DO YOU GET OUT OF HERE?
PRISON TRANSPORT, RIGHT? HOW DO PRISONERS GET LOOSE?
THEY START A *FIRE.*
WARNING. WARNING. SMOKE DETECTED.
*WOO-HOO!* NICE JOB, VENOM BLAST...
EMERGENCY EVACUATION RECOMMENDED.
YEAH, GOOD IDEA--OPEN THE DOOR.
DOOR ACCESS REQUEST RECEIVED-- VOICE PASSCODE REQUIRED.
*UHH...* GREAT-- THINK, MAN-- GONNA NEED ONE SERIOUSLY LUCKY GUESS NOW...
...OR DO I? AFTER ALL-- I HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE, DON'T I? I *HAVE* TO BE THERE AT THE CAPITOL, ACCORDING TO THE VISION--
--WHICH MEANS I *DID* GUESS IT RIGHT. WHICH MEANS ANY GUESS I MAKE...HEY, COMPUTER--

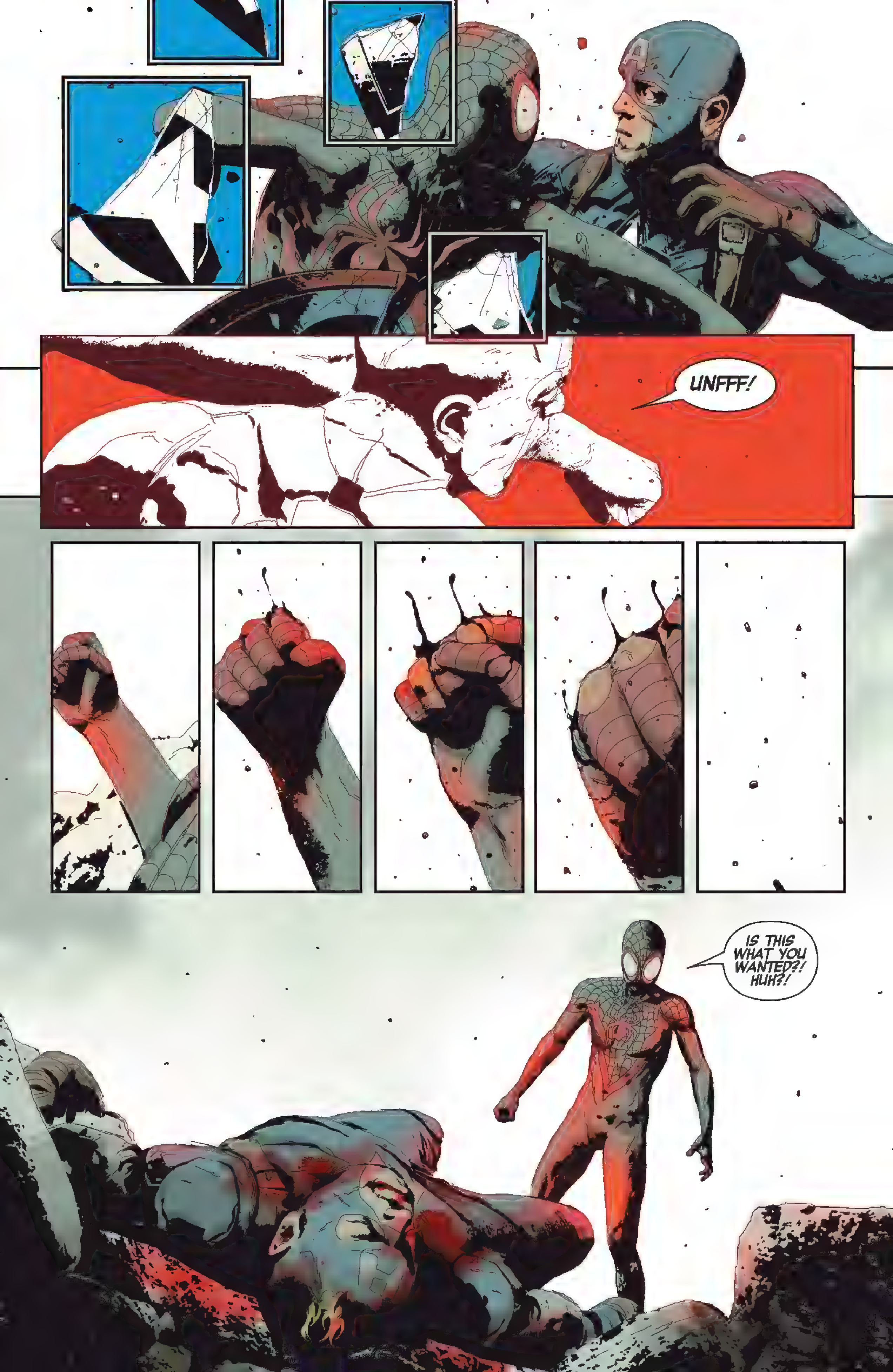

BLAM
COME ON OUT, WIDOW. AIN'T NO POINT HIDING. I KNOW YOU ALL THINK I'M SOME KIND OF TRAITOR--BUT WE WERE NEVER ON THE SAME SIDE.
HE'S RIGHT ABOUT YOU ALL. YOU WERE TOO WEAK. TOO AFRAID TO DO WHAT HAD TO BE DONE. HYDRA WILL, THOUGH. I'VE SEEN IT.
SO HAVE I.

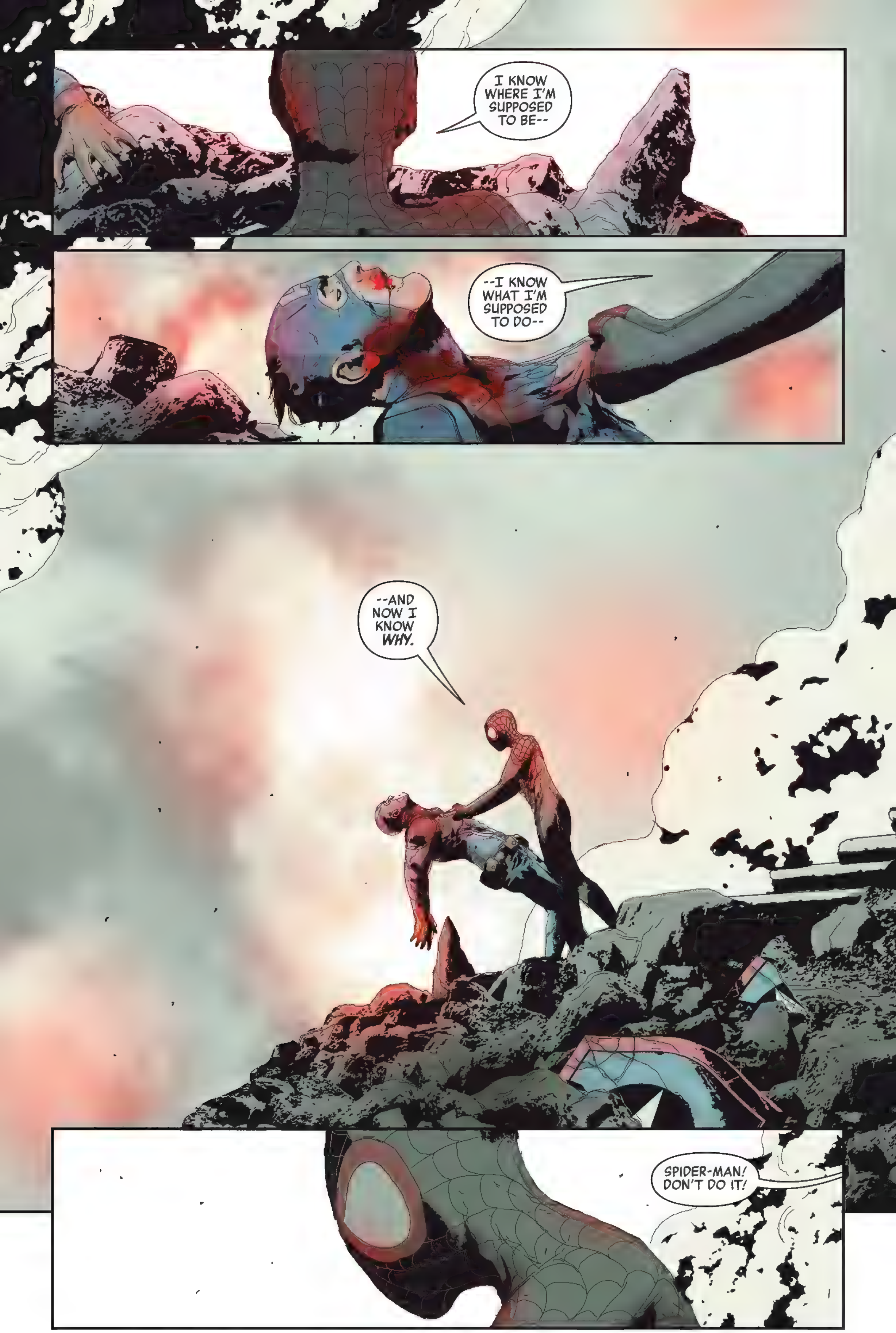

AAAARGH
YOU'RE MAKIN' A MISTAKE... YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND-- HE TOLD ME HIS SECRET...
...ALL THOSE PEOPLE WHO DIED--HE'S GONNA USE THE CUBE. FIX EVERYTHING. MAKE THE WORLD WHAT IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE--THEN HE'S GONNA BRING THEM ALL BACK.
BRING BACK EVERYONE WE LOST.
NEVER PEGGED YOU FOR A CLOSET IDEALIST, FRANK. YOU OF ALL PEOPLE SHOULD KNOW--WE CAN NEVER BRING BACK WHAT WE'VE LOST.
WE CAN ONLY TAKE MORE AWAY.
BOZHE MOI...
SPIDER-MAN!

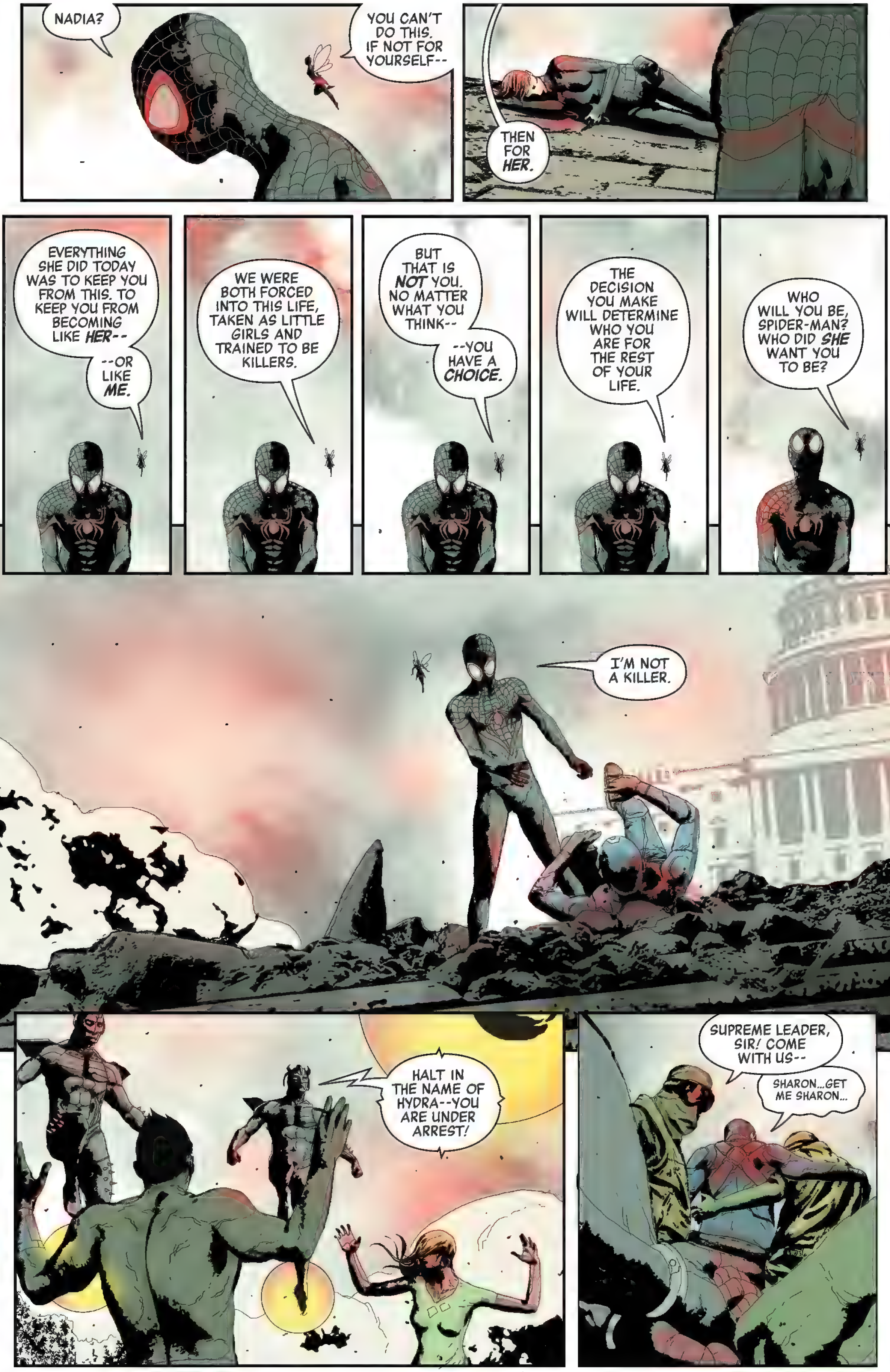

YOU.
YOU DON'T LOOK SURPRISED TO SEE ME.
HOW COULD I BE?
WE BOTH KNOW HOW THIS *ENDS*. GO ON THEN, SON--
--LET'S SEE WHAT YOU'RE MADE OF.

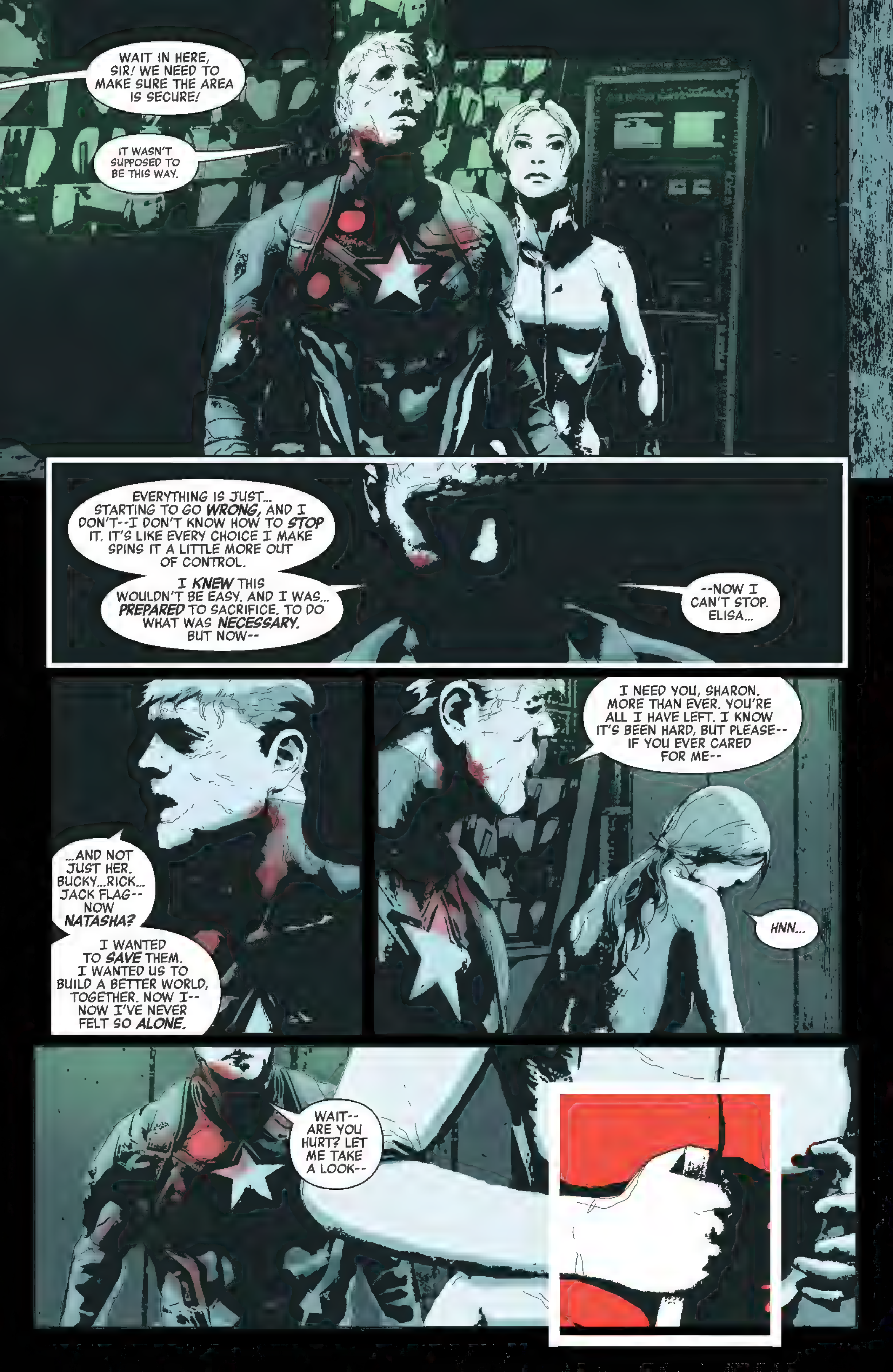


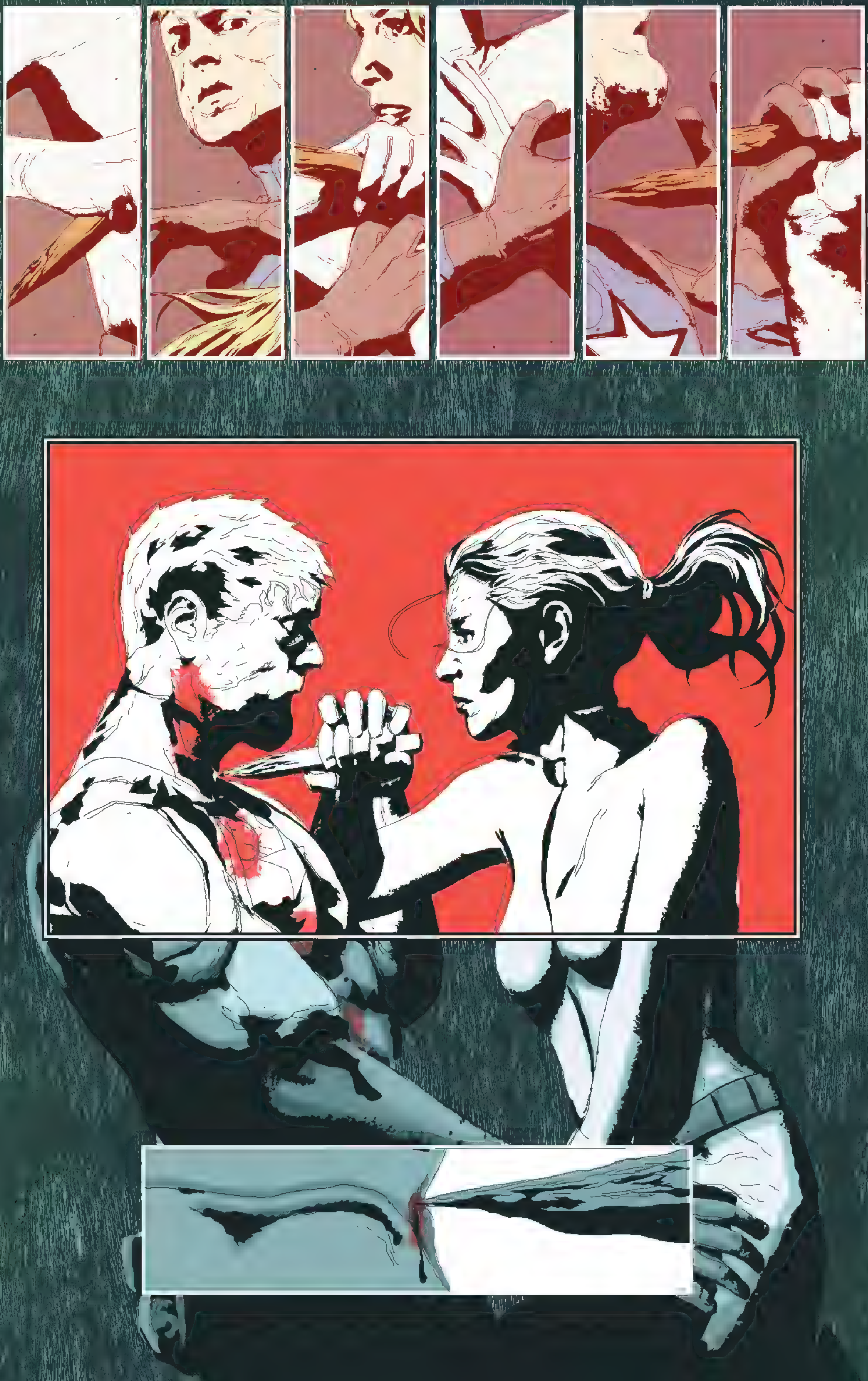
NOOOO!!

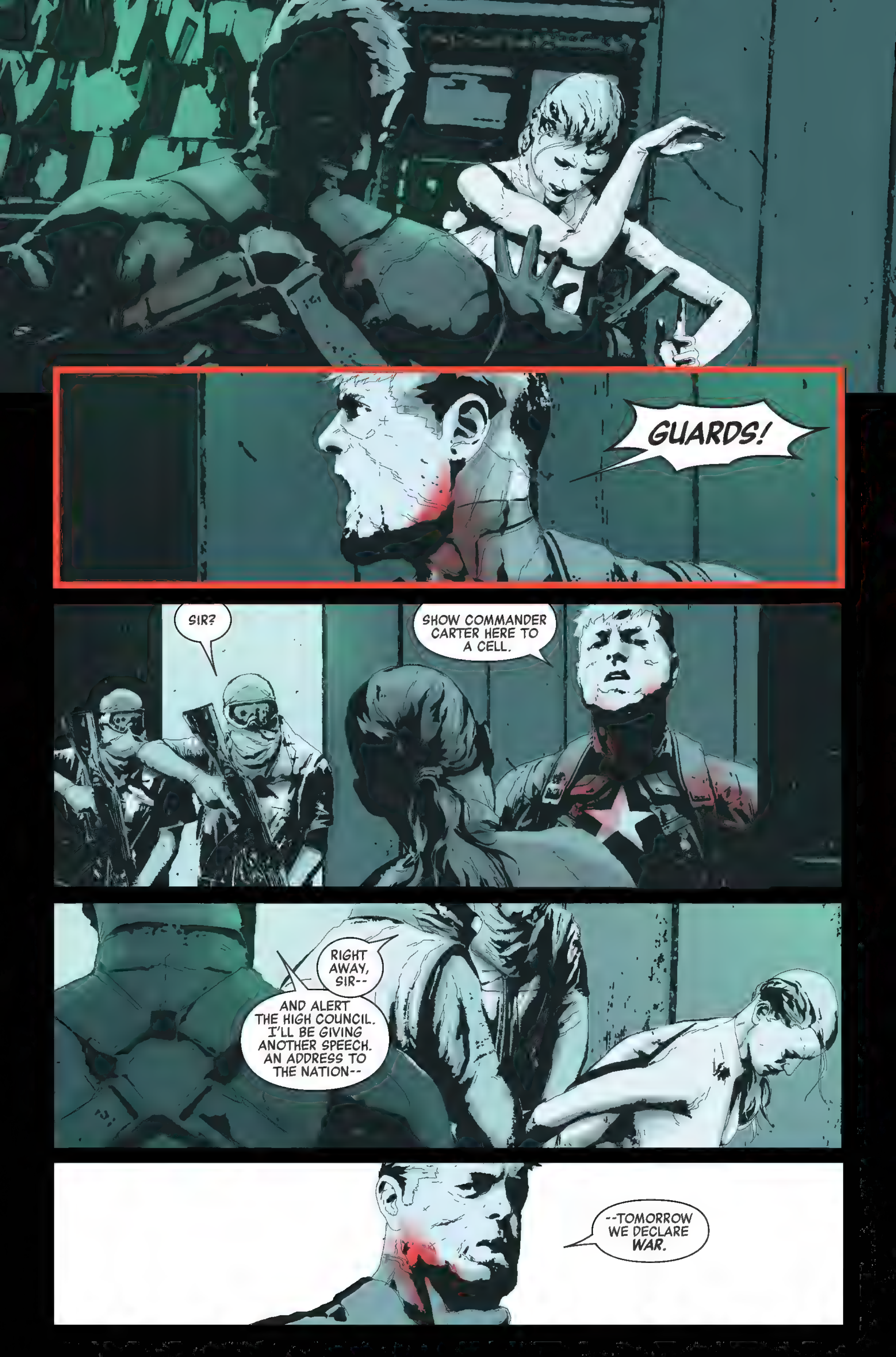

UNFFF!
IS THIS WHAT YOU WANTED?! HUH?!

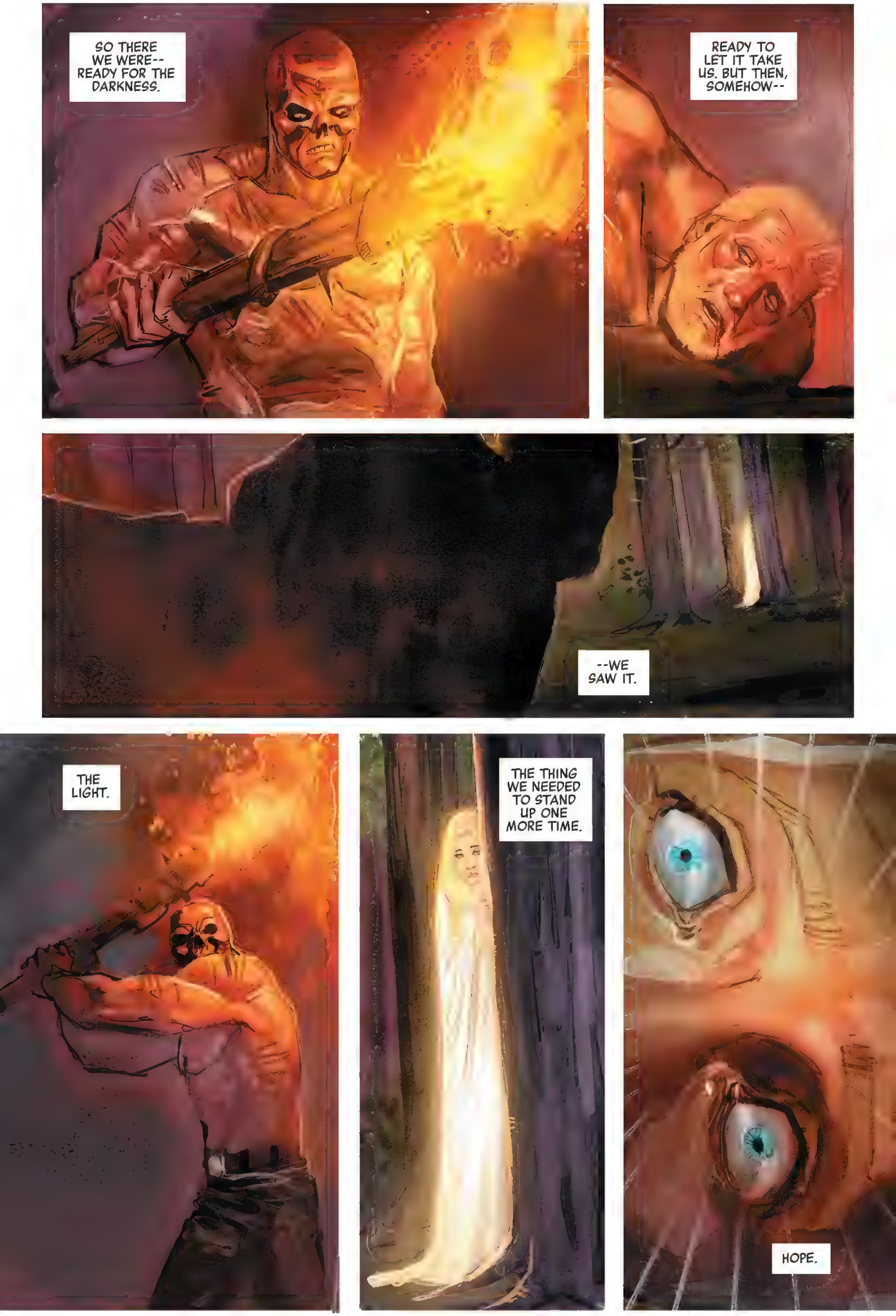

I KNOW WHERE I'M SUPPOSED TO BE--
--I KNOW WHAT I'M SUPPOSED TO DO--
--AND NOW I KNOW *WHY.*
SPIDER-MAN! DON'T DO IT!

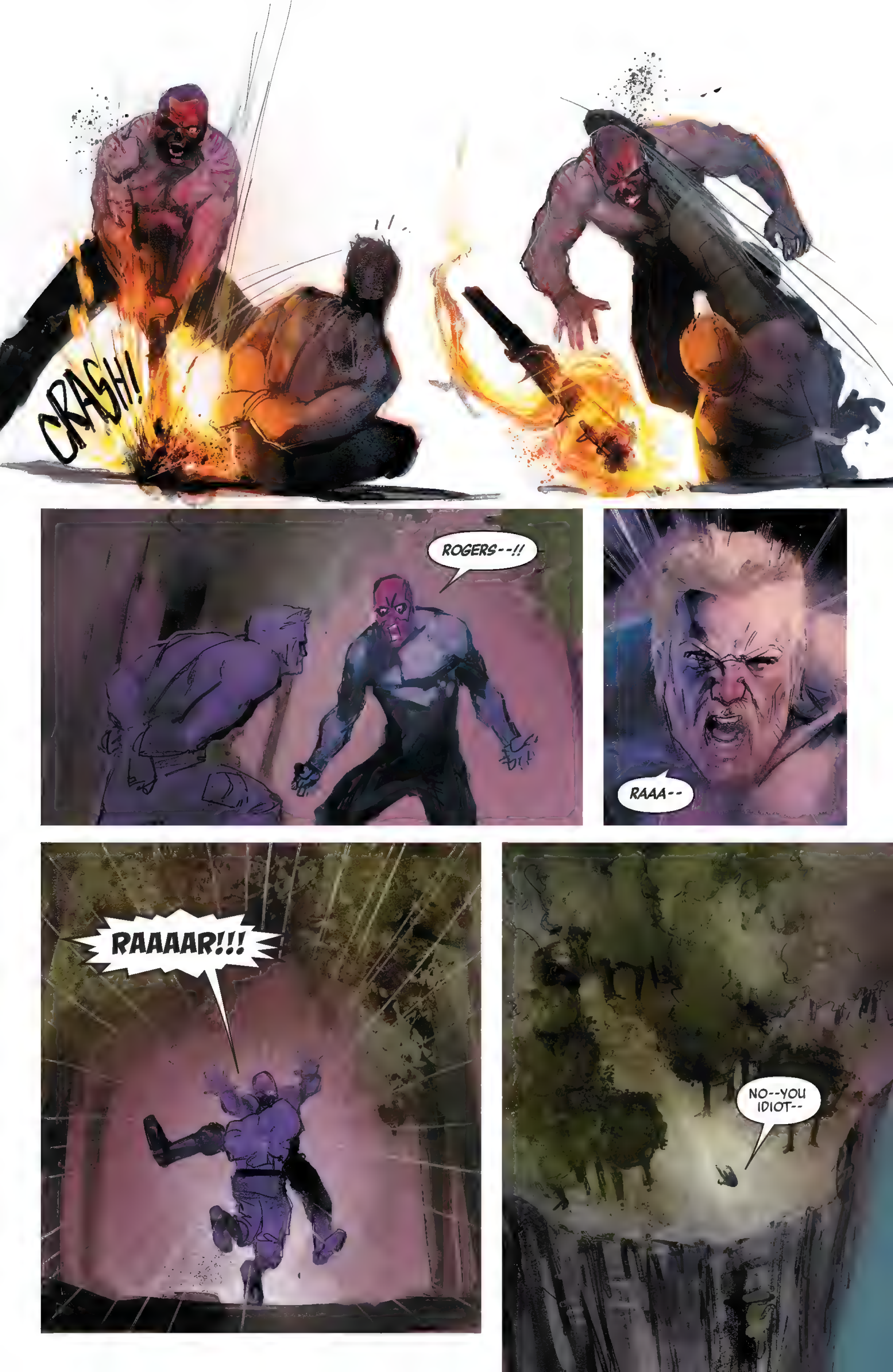

NADIA?
YOU CAN'T DO THIS. IF NOT FOR YOURSELF--
THEN FOR *HER*.
EVERYTHING SHE DID TODAY WAS TO KEEP YOU FROM THIS. TO KEEP YOU FROM BECOMING LIKE *HER*--
--OR LIKE *ME*.
WE WERE BOTH FORCED INTO THIS LIFE, TAKEN AS LITTLE GIRLS AND TRAINED TO BE KILLERS.
BUT THAT IS *NOT* YOU. NO MATTER WHAT YOU THINK--
--YOU HAVE A *CHOICE*.
THE DECISION YOU MAKE WILL DETERMINE WHO YOU ARE FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE.
WHO WILL YOU BE, SPIDER-MAN? WHO DID *SHE* WANT YOU TO BE?
I'M NOT A KILLER.
HALT IN THE NAME OF HYDRA--YOU ARE UNDER ARREST!
SUPREME LEADER, SIR! COME WITH US--
SHARON...GET ME SHARON...

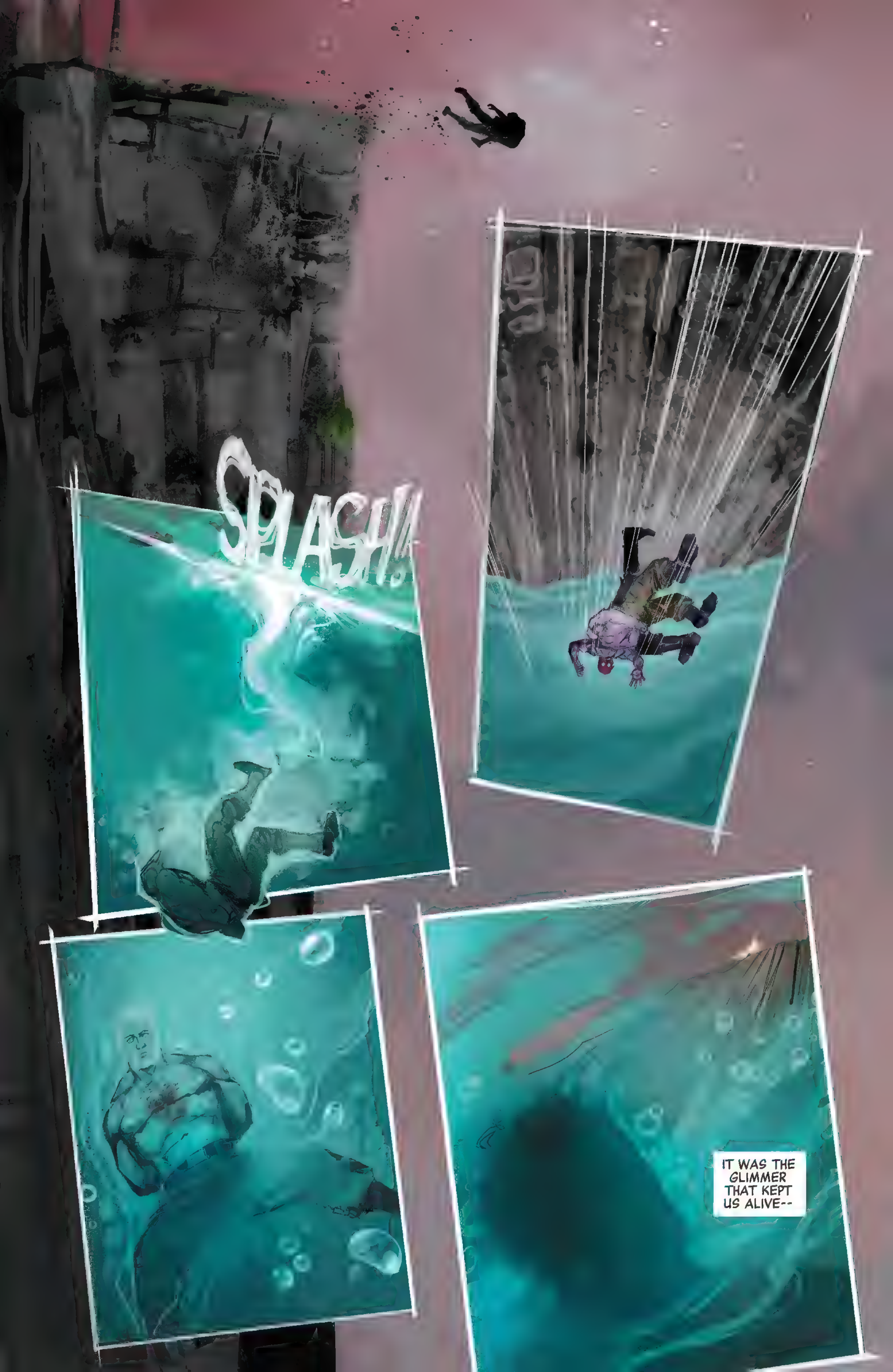

WAIT IN HERE, SIR! WE NEED TO MAKE SURE THE AREA IS SECURE!
IT WASN'T SUPPOSED TO BE THIS WAY.
EVERYTHING IS JUST... STARTING TO GO **WRONG,** AND I DON'T--I DON'T KNOW HOW TO **STOP** IT. IT'S LIKE EVERY CHOICE I MAKE SPINS IT A LITTLE MORE OUT OF CONTROL.
I **KNEW** THIS WOULDN'T BE EASY. AND I WAS... **PREPARED** TO SACRIFICE. TO DO WHAT WAS **NECESSARY.** BUT NOW--
--NOW I CAN'T STOP. ELISA...
...AND NOT JUST HER. BUCKY...RICK... JACK FLAG-- NOW **NATASHA?**
I WANTED TO **SAVE** THEM. I WANTED US TO BUILD A BETTER WORLD, TOGETHER. NOW I-- NOW I'VE NEVER FELT SO **ALONE.**
I NEED YOU, SHARON. MORE THAN EVER. YOU'RE ALL I HAVE LEFT. I KNOW IT'S BEEN HARD, BUT PLEASE-- IF YOU EVER CARED FOR ME--
*HNN...*
WAIT-- ARE YOU HURT? LET ME TAKE A LOOK--

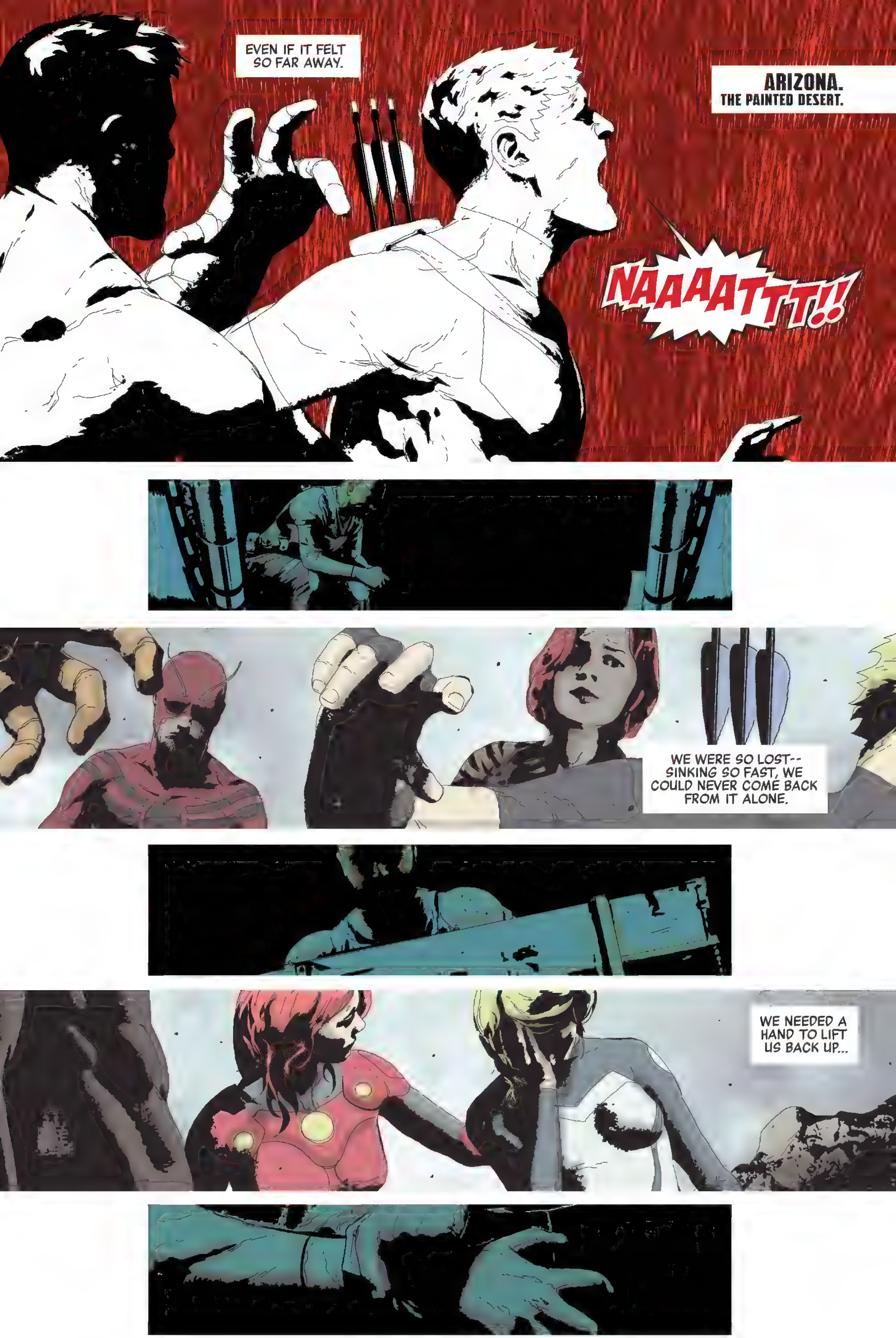


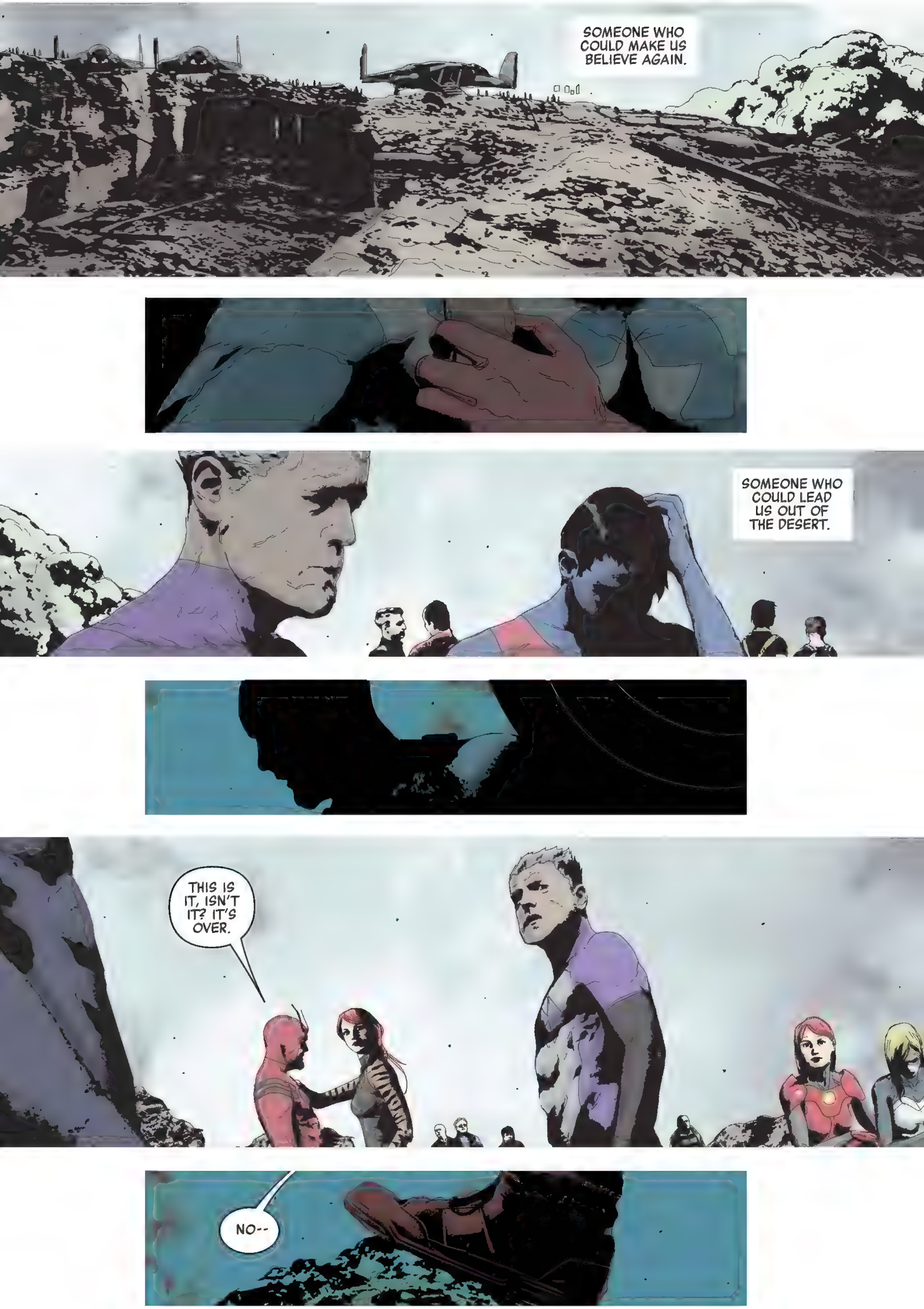

GUARDS!
SIR?
SHOW COMMANDER CARTER HERE TO A CELL.
RIGHT AWAY, SIR--
AND ALERT THE HIGH COUNCIL. I'LL BE GIVING ANOTHER SPEECH. AN ADDRESS TO THE NATION--
--TOMORROW WE DECLARE WAR.

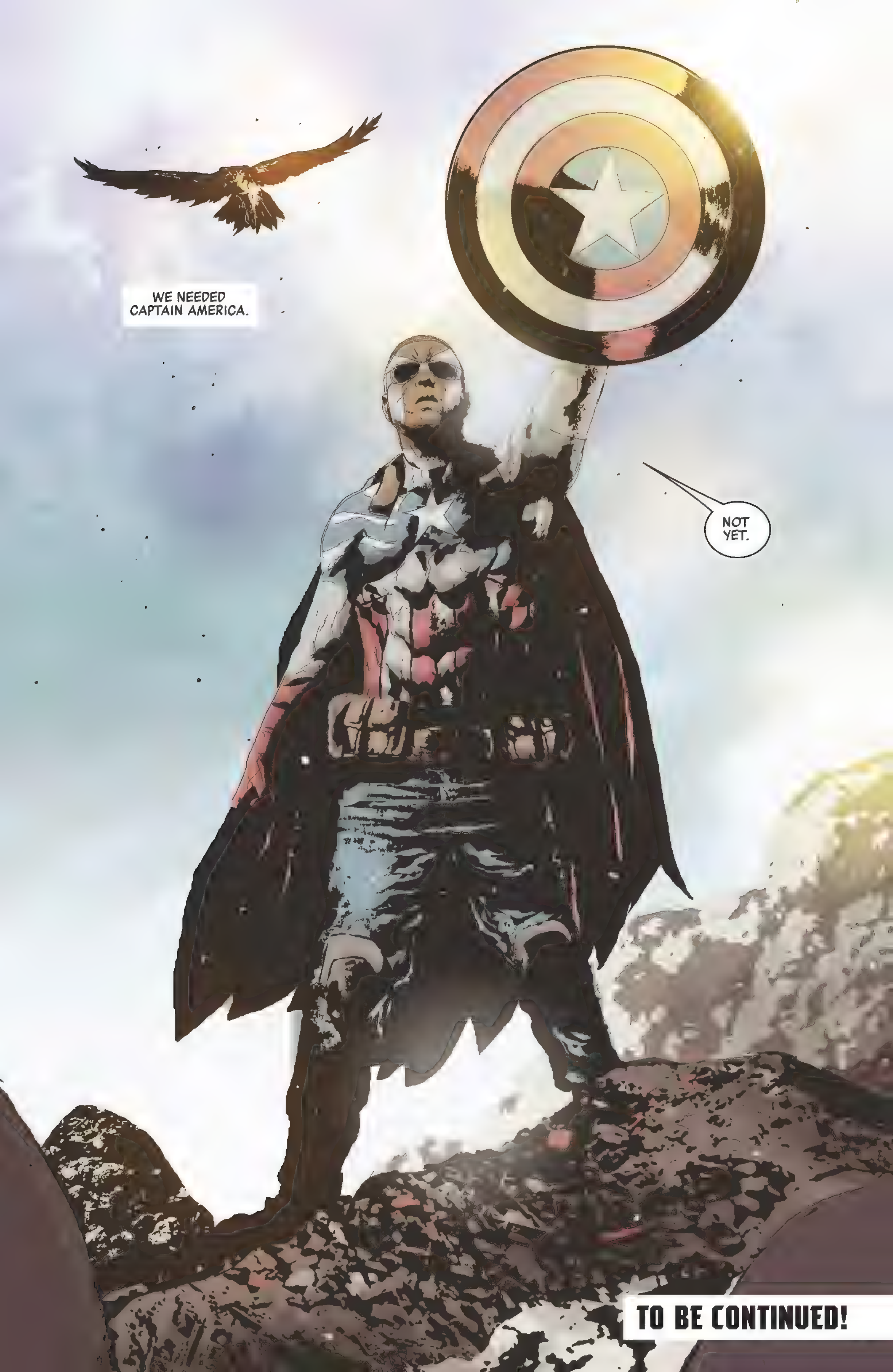

SO THERE WE WERE-- READY FOR THE DARKNESS.
READY TO LET IT TAKE US. BUT THEN, SOMEHOW--
--WE SAW IT.
THE LIGHT.
THE THING WE NEEDED TO STAND UP ONE MORE TIME.
HOPE.


CRASH!
ROGERS--!!
RAAA--
RAAAAR!!!
NO--YOU IDIOT--


SPLASH!!
IT WAS THE GLIMMER THAT KEPT US ALIVE--


EVEN IF IT FELT SO FAR AWAY.
ARIZONA.
THE PAINTED DESERT.
NAAAATTT!!
WE WERE SO LOST-- SINKING SO FAST, WE COULD NEVER COME BACK FROM IT ALONE.
WE NEEDED A HAND TO LIFT US BACK UP...


SOMEONE WHO COULD MAKE US BELIEVE AGAIN.
SOMEONE WHO COULD LEAD US OUT OF THE DESERT.
THIS IS IT, ISN'T IT? IT'S OVER.
NO--


WE NEEDED CAPTAIN AMERICA.
NOT YET.
TO BE CONTINUED!

# SECRET EMPIRE

## JULY

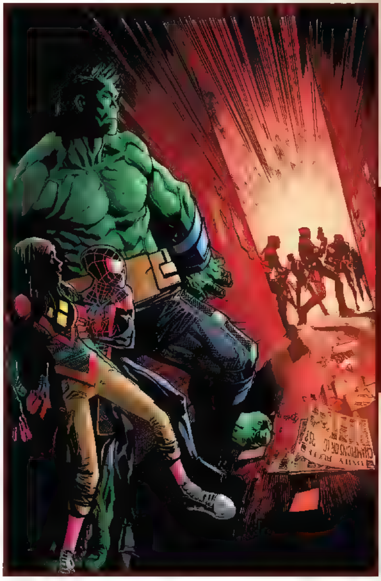
### X-MEN GOLD #7 & #8

The X-Mansion was one of the few safe places in the Darkforce --until they let X-Cutioner in!

### X-MEN BLUE #7 & #8

Emma Frost is back and badder than ever.

### CHAMPIONS #10



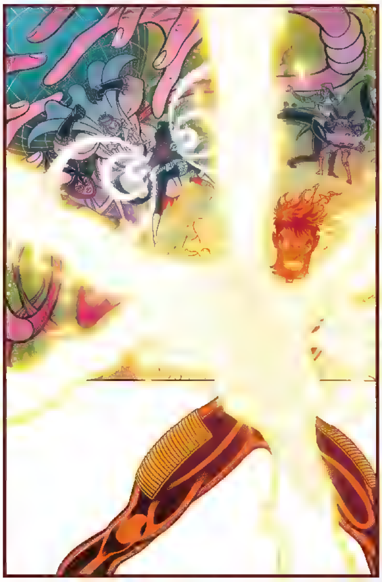
The Champions storm an Inhuman holding camp searching for their missing teammate.

## BEYOND THE SHIELD

### THE MIGHTY CAPTAIN MARVEL #7

Can Captain Marvel's forces hold out against the Chitauri?

### SECRET WARRIORS #4



Quake struggles to keep her team together long enough to confront Mister Hyde!

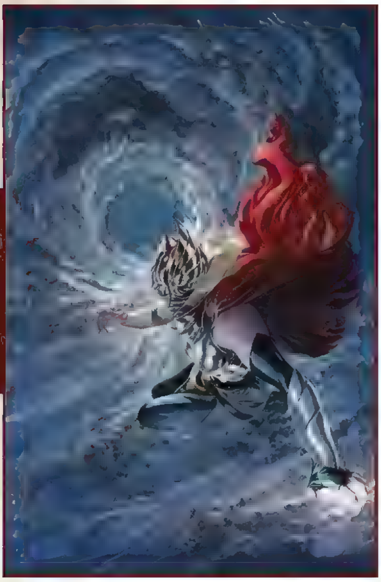
### DEADPOOL #33 & #34

Deadpool threw in with Hydra --what does that mean for his relationship with his daughter?

# SECRET EMPIRE

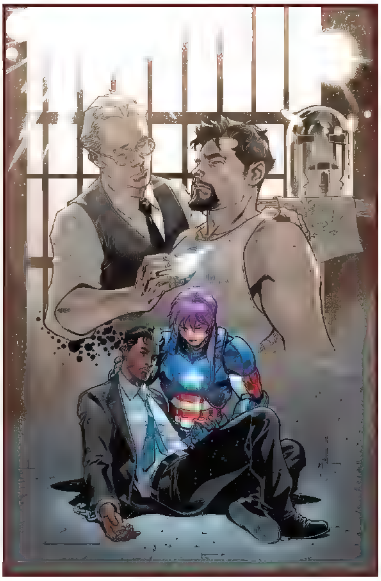
## JULY

### AVENGERS #9



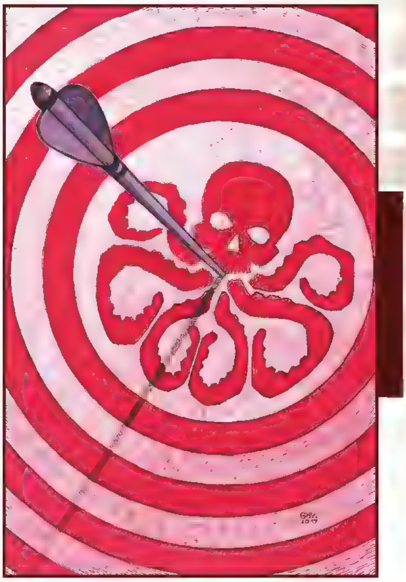
WHAT HAPPENED TO THOR AFTER CAPTAIN AMERICA STOLE HER HAMMER?

### U.S.AVENGERS #8



TONI HO'S FATHER DIED SAVING TONY STARK'S LIFE--WILL TONI DO THE SAME FOR A DYING ROBERTO DA COSTA?

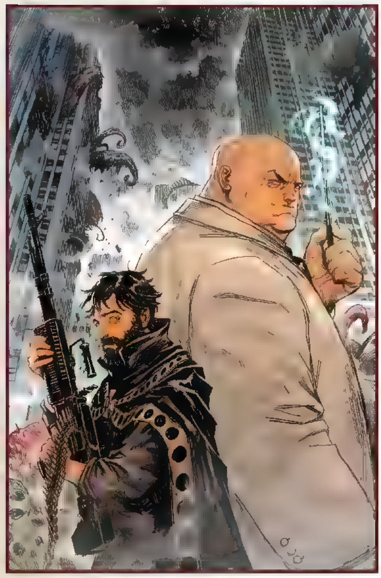
### OCCUPY AVENGERS #9



HAWKEYE'S TEAM MAKES A FINAL STAND TO PROTECT A GROUP OF FARMERS FROM HYDRA.

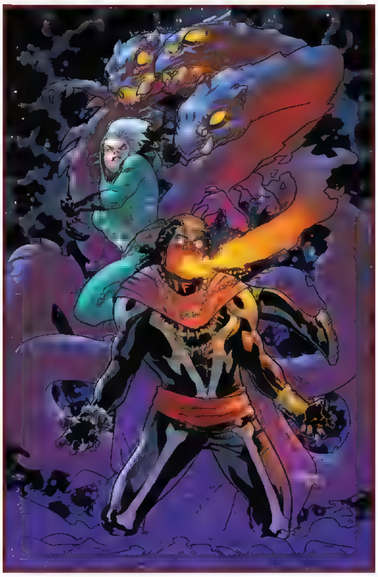
## DARKFORCE NEW YORK

### DOCTOR STRANGE #23



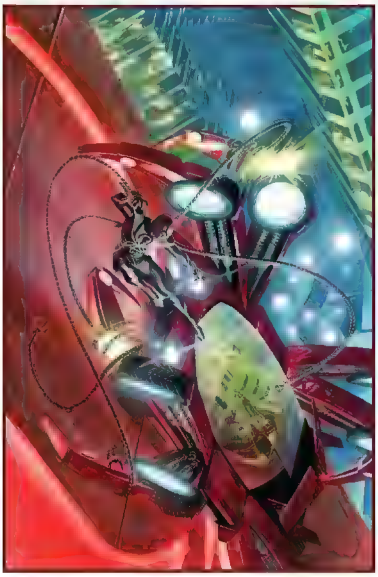
DOCTOR STRANGE AND WILSON FISK TEAM UP TO TAKE DOWN BARON MORDO!

### UNCANNY AVENGERS #25



THE UNITY SQUAD FACES DARKNESS WITHOUT AND WITHIN AS THE DARKFORCE ASSAULTS NEW YORK!

### AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #30



OTTO OCTAVIUS IS BACK--AND HE'S WORKING WITH HYDRA!

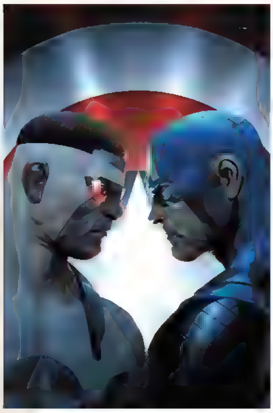
# SECRET EMPIRE

## NEXT

SECRET EMPIRE
#8
BROOKS

TO FORM AN ARMY BIG ENOUGH TO TAKE DOWN CAPTAIN AMERICA, THE UNDERGROUND HAS TO TACKLE THEIR BIGGEST OBSTACLES: THE DARKFORCE DIMENSION AND THE PLANETARY DEFENSE SHIELD.

### CAPTAIN AMERICA #25



TWO HEROES. ONE MANTLE. NO QUARTER.

### SECRET EMPIRE: BRAVE NEW WORLD #5

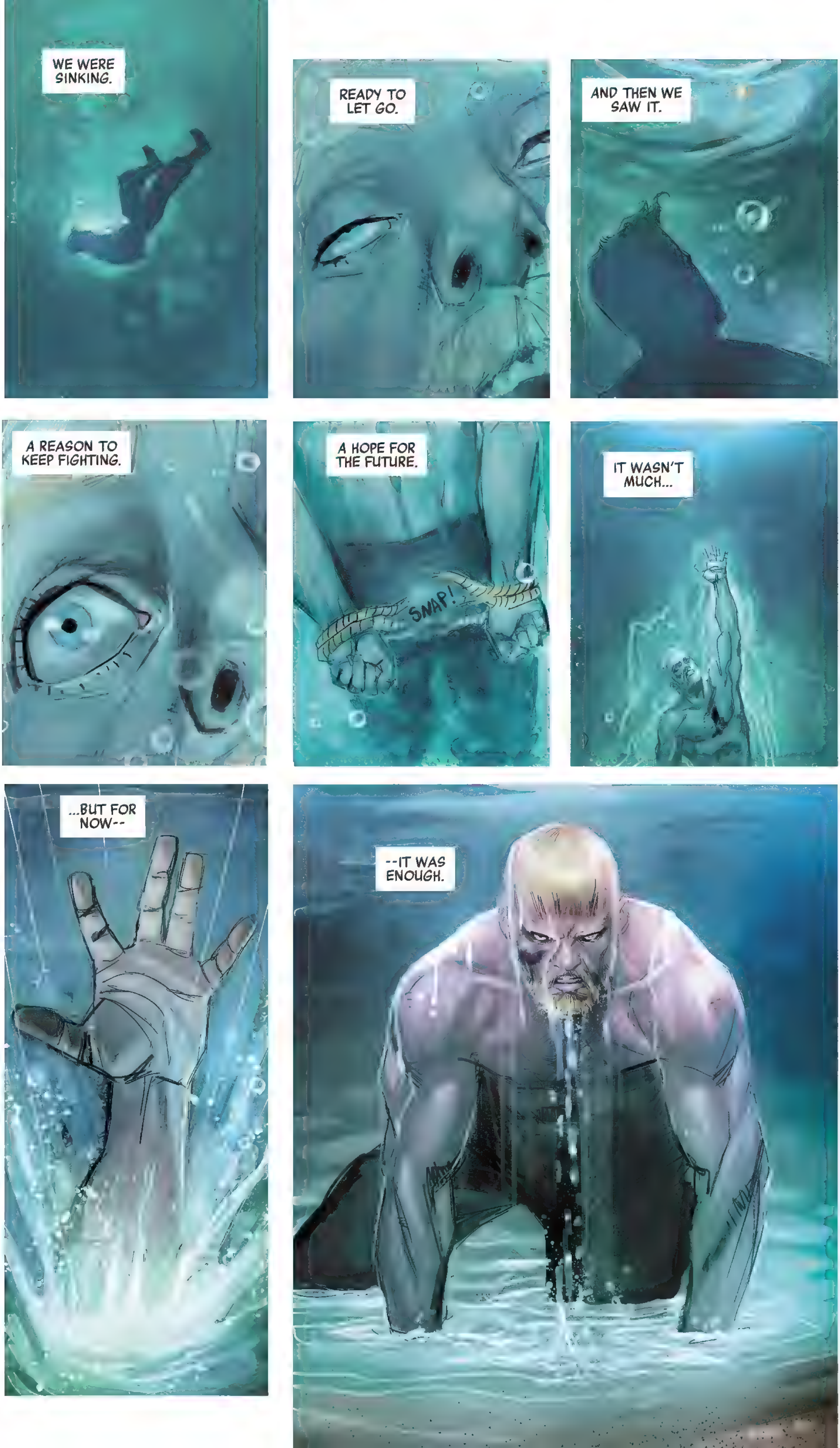
BLADE, DOMINO AND THE INVADERS TAKE ON HYDRA!

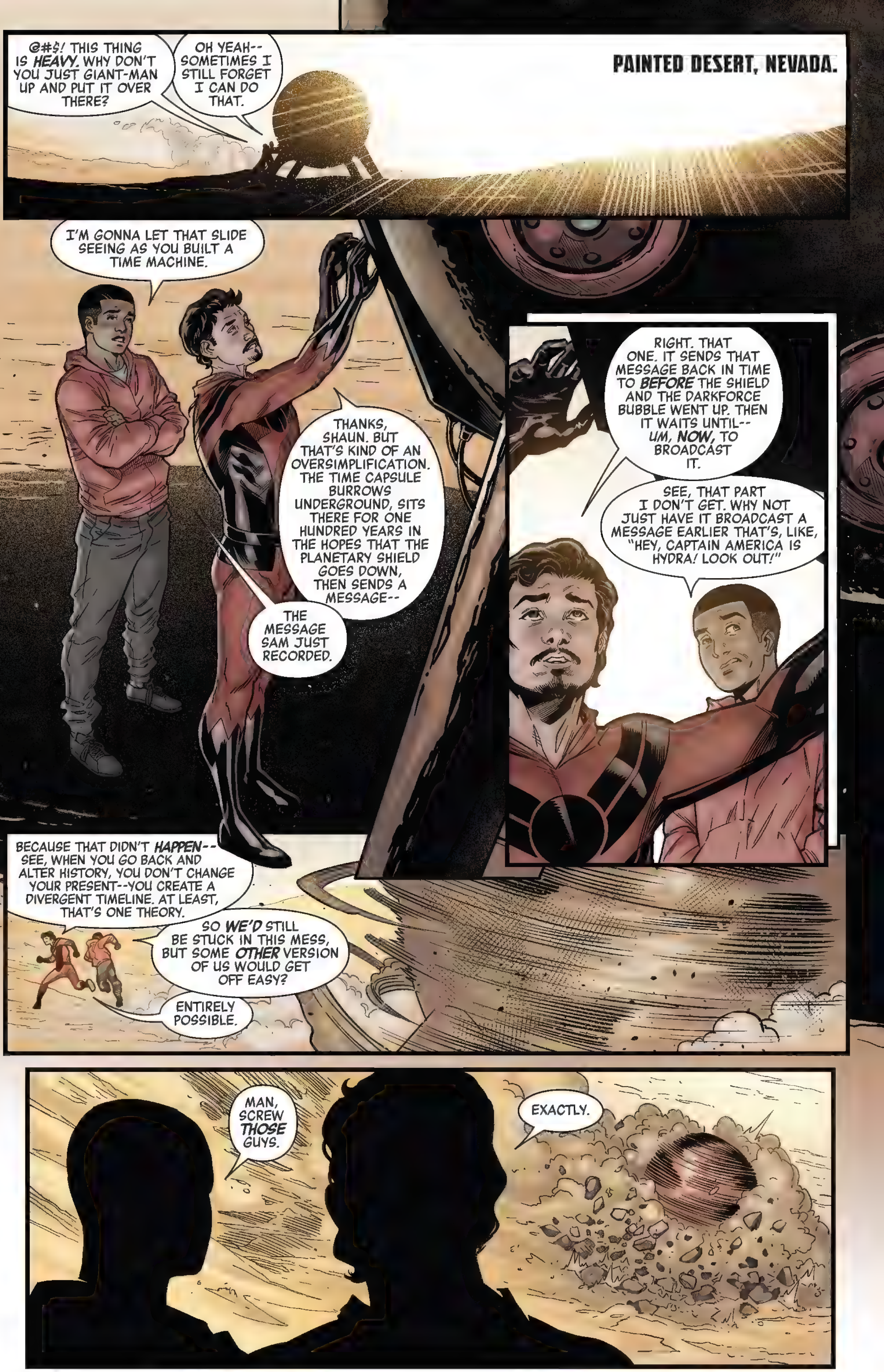
# SECRET EMPIRE™

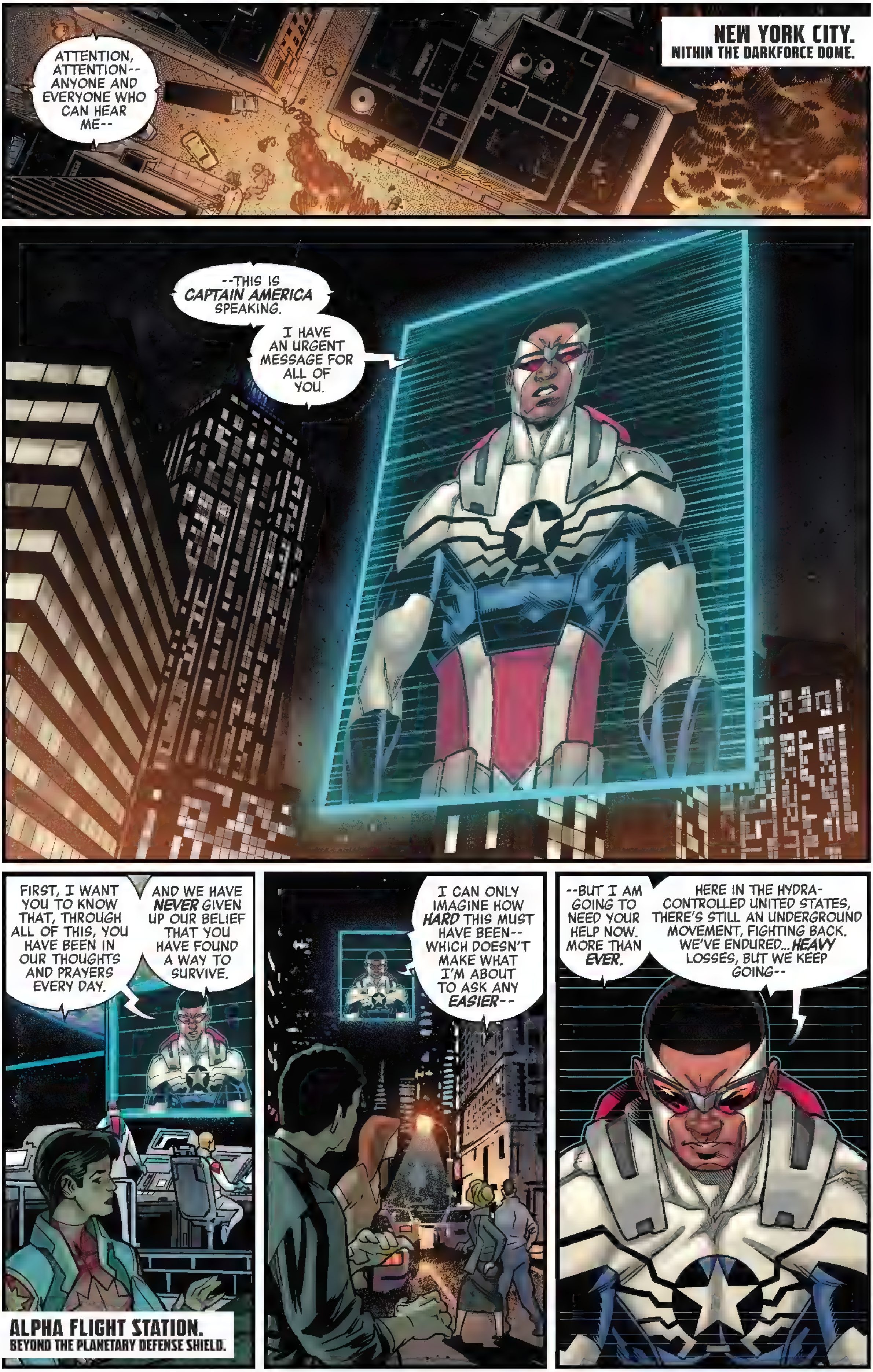
MARVEL

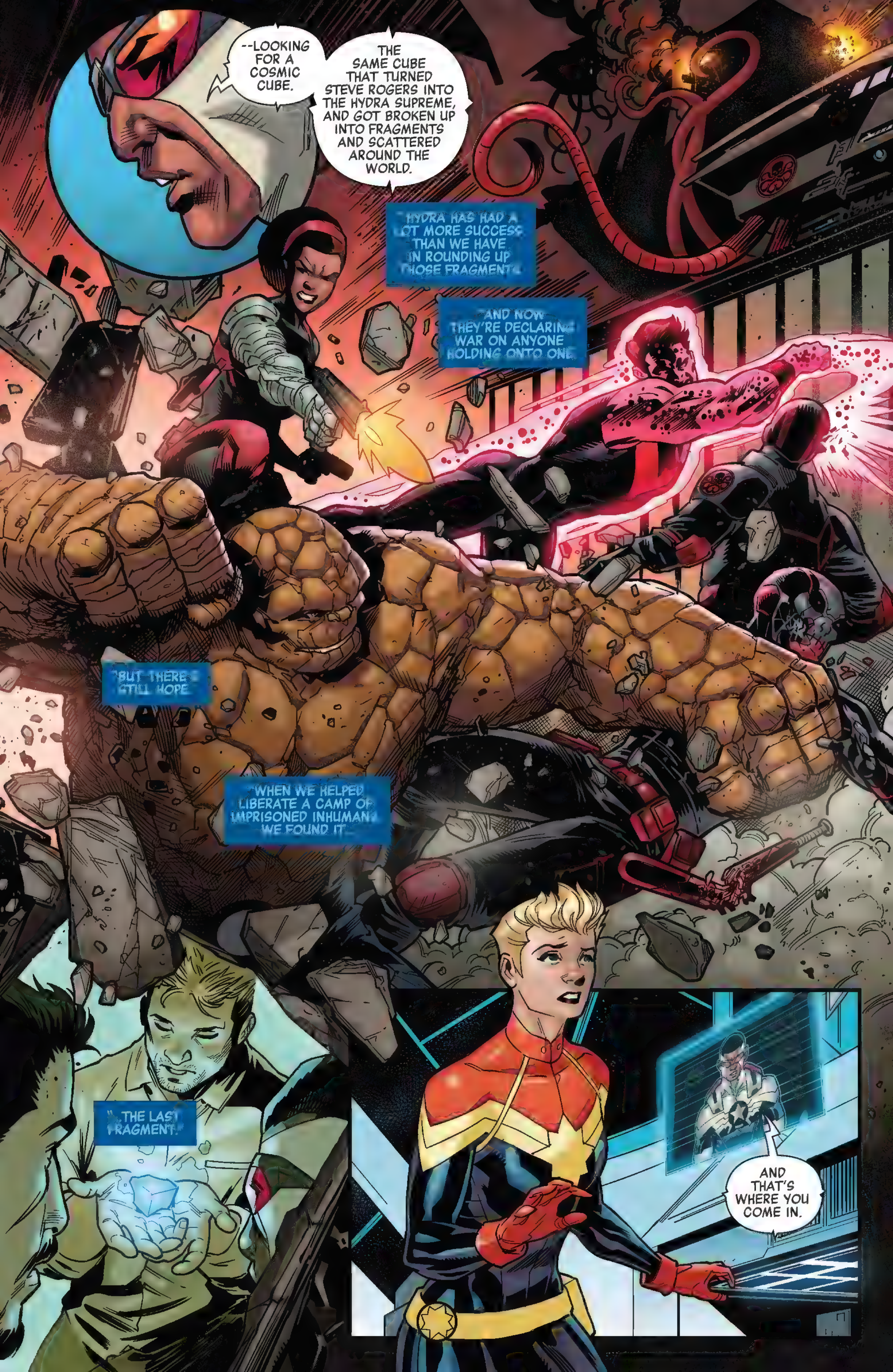
# #8

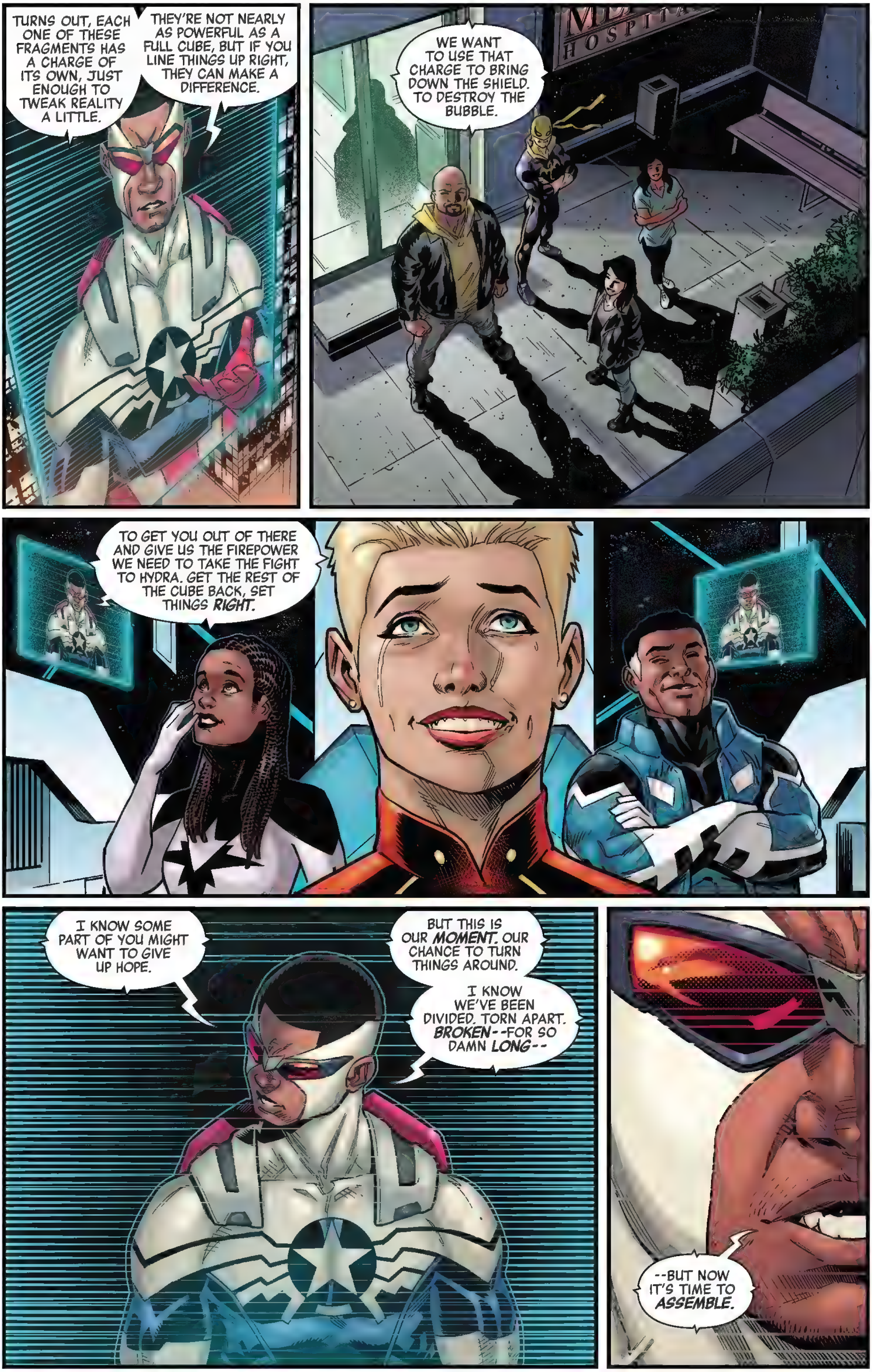
NICK SPENCER, DANIEL ACUÑA, ROD REIS, SEAN IZAAKSE


WE WERE SINKING.
READY TO LET GO.
AND THEN WE SAW IT.
A REASON TO KEEP FIGHTING.
A HOPE FOR THE FUTURE.
SNAP!
IT WASN'T MUCH...
...BUT FOR NOW--
--IT WAS ENOUGH.


PAINTED DESERT, NEVADA.
@#$! THIS THING IS HEAVY. WHY DON'T YOU JUST GIANT-MAN UP AND PUT IT OVER THERE?
OH YEAH-- SOMETIMES I STILL FORGET I CAN DO THAT.
I'M GONNA LET THAT SLIDE SEEING AS YOU BUILT A TIME MACHINE.
THANKS, SHAUN. BUT THAT'S KIND OF AN OVERSIMPLIFICATION. THE TIME CAPSULE BURROWS UNDERGROUND, SITS THERE FOR ONE HUNDRED YEARS IN THE HOPES THAT THE PLANETARY SHIELD GOES DOWN, THEN SENDS A MESSAGE--
THE MESSAGE SAM JUST RECORDED.
RIGHT. THAT ONE. IT SENDS THAT MESSAGE BACK IN TIME TO BEFORE THE SHIELD AND THE DARKFORCE BUBBLE WENT UP. THEN IT WAITS UNTIL-- UM, NOW, TO BROADCAST IT.
SEE, THAT PART I DON'T GET. WHY NOT JUST HAVE IT BROADCAST A MESSAGE EARLIER THAT'S, LIKE, "HEY, CAPTAIN AMERICA IS HYDRA! LOOK OUT!"
BECAUSE THAT DIDN'T HAPPEN-- SEE, WHEN YOU GO BACK AND ALTER HISTORY, YOU DON'T CHANGE YOUR PRESENT--YOU CREATE A DIVERGENT TIMELINE. AT LEAST, THAT'S ONE THEORY.
SO WE'D STILL BE STUCK IN THIS MESS, BUT SOME OTHER VERSION OF US WOULD GET OFF EASY?
ENTIRELY POSSIBLE.
MAN, SCREW THOSE GUYS.
EXACTLY.


NEW YORK CITY.
WITHIN THE DARKFORCE DOME.
ATTENTION, ATTENTION-- ANYONE AND EVERYONE WHO CAN HEAR ME--
--THIS IS CAPTAIN AMERICA SPEAKING.
I HAVE AN URGENT MESSAGE FOR ALL OF YOU.
FIRST, I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT, THROUGH ALL OF THIS, YOU HAVE BEEN IN OUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS EVERY DAY.
AND WE HAVE NEVER GIVEN UP OUR BELIEF THAT YOU HAVE FOUND A WAY TO SURVIVE.
ALPHA FLIGHT STATION.
BEYOND THE PLANETARY DEFENSE SHIELD.
I CAN ONLY IMAGINE HOW HARD THIS MUST HAVE BEEN-- WHICH DOESN'T MAKE WHAT I'M ABOUT TO ASK ANY EASIER--
--BUT I AM GOING TO NEED YOUR HELP NOW. MORE THAN EVER.
HERE IN THE HYDRA-CONTROLLED UNITED STATES, THERE'S STILL AN UNDERGROUND MOVEMENT, FIGHTING BACK. WE'VE ENDURED... HEAVY LOSSES, BUT WE KEEP GOING--


--LOOKING FOR A COSMIC CUBE.
THE SAME CUBE THAT TURNED STEVE ROGERS INTO THE HYDRA SUPREME, AND GOT BROKEN UP INTO FRAGMENTS AND SCATTERED AROUND THE WORLD.
"HYDRA HAS HAD A LOT MORE SUCCESS THAN WE HAVE IN ROUNDING UP THOSE FRAGMENTS.
"AND NOW THEY'RE DECLARING WAR ON ANYONE HOLDING ONTO ONE.
"BUT THERE'S STILL HOPE.
"WHEN WE HELPED LIBERATE A CAMP OF IMPRISONED INHUMANS WE FOUND IT...
"...THE LAST FRAGMENT."
AND THAT'S WHERE YOU COME IN.


TURNS OUT, EACH ONE OF THESE FRAGMENTS HAS A CHARGE OF ITS OWN, JUST ENOUGH TO TWEAK REALITY A LITTLE.
THEY'RE NOT NEARLY AS POWERFUL AS A FULL CUBE, BUT IF YOU LINE THINGS UP RIGHT, THEY CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.
WE WANT TO USE THAT CHARGE TO BRING DOWN THE SHIELD. TO DESTROY THE BUBBLE.
TO GET YOU OUT OF THERE AND GIVE US THE FIREPOWER WE NEED TO TAKE THE FIGHT TO HYDRA. GET THE REST OF THE CUBE BACK, SET THINGS *RIGHT.*
I KNOW SOME PART OF YOU MIGHT WANT TO GIVE UP HOPE.
BUT THIS IS OUR *MOMENT.* OUR CHANCE TO TURN THINGS AROUND.
I KNOW WE'VE BEEN DIVIDED. TORN APART. *BROKEN*--FOR SO DAMN *LONG*--
--BUT NOW IT'S TIME TO *ASSEMBLE.*

# SECRET EMPIRE

**WARNING! READ THIS ISSUE AFTER CAPTAIN AMERICA #25!**

STEVE ROGERS, A.K.A. CAPTAIN AMERICA, HAS CLAIMED THE UNITED STATES FOR HYDRA. WITH MOST OF EARTH'S HEROES TRAPPED IN THE DARKFORCE BUBBLE SURROUNDING MANHATTAN OR STRANDED BEHIND THE PLANETARY DEFENSE SHIELD FACING A CHITAURI ONSLAUGHT, HIS POWER SEEMS ABSOLUTE.

AFTER BLACK WIDOW'S ATTEMPT TO ASSASSINATE STEVE ROGERS ENDED IN TRAGEDY, SAM WILSON TOOK UP THE SHIELD ONCE AGAIN TO RALLY WHAT REMAINED OF THE UNDERGROUND--THIS TIME, AS CAPTAIN AMERICA. HE LED HIS FELLOW HEROES TO LIBERATE THE INHUMANS BEING HELD IN NEW ATTILAN--AND THEY MANAGED TO SECURE A COSMIC CUBE FRAGMENT IN THE PROCESS. TONY STARK BELIEVES THAT, EVEN IF IT CAN'T REWRITE REALITY, IT MAY BE ABLE TO GIVE THEM THE EDGE THEY NEED TO DEFEAT HYDRA.

BUT A SECOND ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT, THIS ONE BY SHARON CARTER, HAS GALVANIZED STEVE ROGERS INTO DECLARING WAR ON ANYONE WHO RESISTS HIS REGIME. HE FORCED NEW TIAN TO SURRENDER AND CAPTURED THE BLACK PANTHER, TAKING WAKANDA OUT OF THE FIGHT.

HE CONSIDERS NAMOR ALREADY DEFEATED, BUT THE RULER OF ATLANTIS HAS AN ACE UP HIS SLEEVE...

WRITER ▪ NICK SPENCER · ARTIST ▪ DANIEL ACUÑA
ADDITIONAL ART ▪ ROD REIS; SEAN IZAAKSE & JAVA TARTAGLIA
LETTERER ▪ VC'S TRAVIS LANHAM
RECAP PAGE ART ▪ ANDREA SORRENTINO
COVER ▪ MARK BROOKS
VARIANT COVERS ▪ DAN MORA & EDGAR DELGADO; ANDREA SORRENTINO; JOHN TYLER CHRISTOPHER; KEISUKE MIZUNO

PRODUCTION DESIGN ▪ CARLOS LAO · ASSISTANT EDITOR ▪ ALANNA SMITH
EDITOR ▪ TOM BREVOORT · EDITOR IN CHIEF ▪ AXEL ALONSO
CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER ▪ JOE QUESADA · PRESIDENT ▪ DAN BUCKLEY
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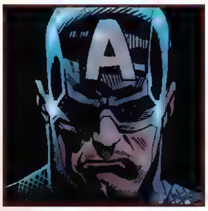
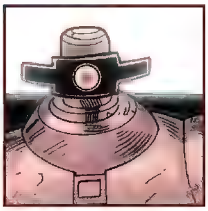
## HYDRA

HYDRA COMMAND

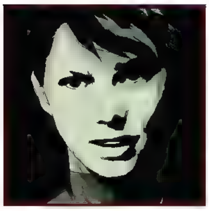


CAPTAIN AMERICA

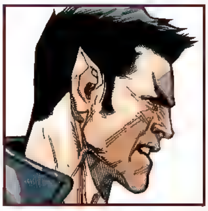


ARNIM ZOLA

## UNAFFILIATED

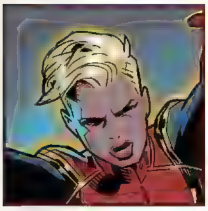


MARIA HILL

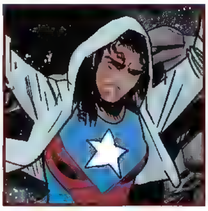


NAMOR

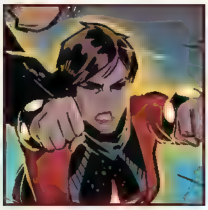
## BEYOND THE SHIELD



CAPTAIN MARVEL



AMERICA CHAVEZ



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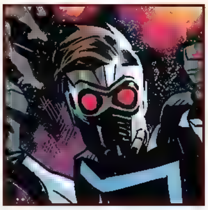
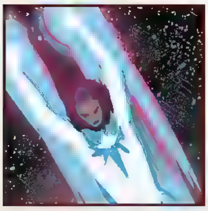


STAR-LORD



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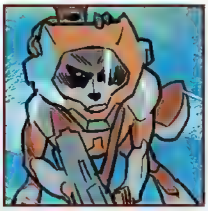
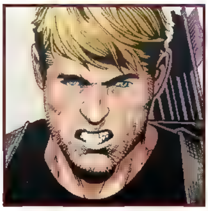


ROCKET RACCOON

## THE UNDERGROUND



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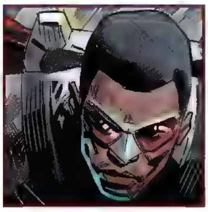
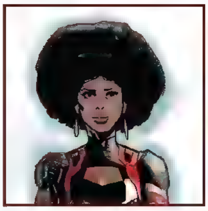
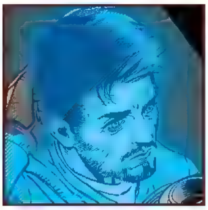


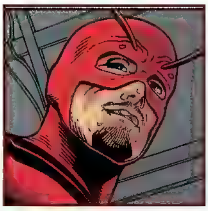
SAM WILSON



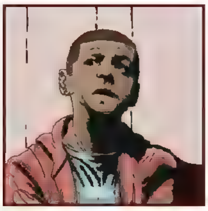
MISTY KNIGHT



TONY STARK A.I.

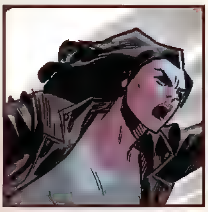


GIANT-MAN

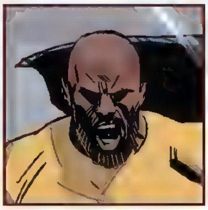


RAYSHAUN LUCAS

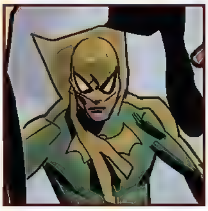
## DARKFORCE NEW YORK



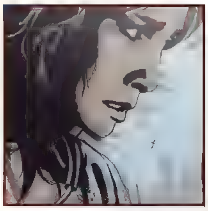
JESSICA JONES



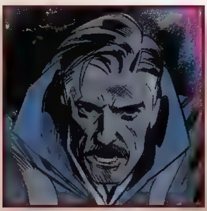
LUKE CAGE



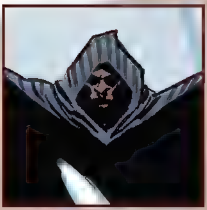
IRON FIST



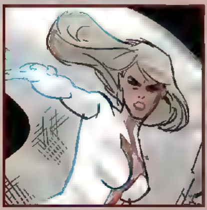
CLAIRE TEMPLE



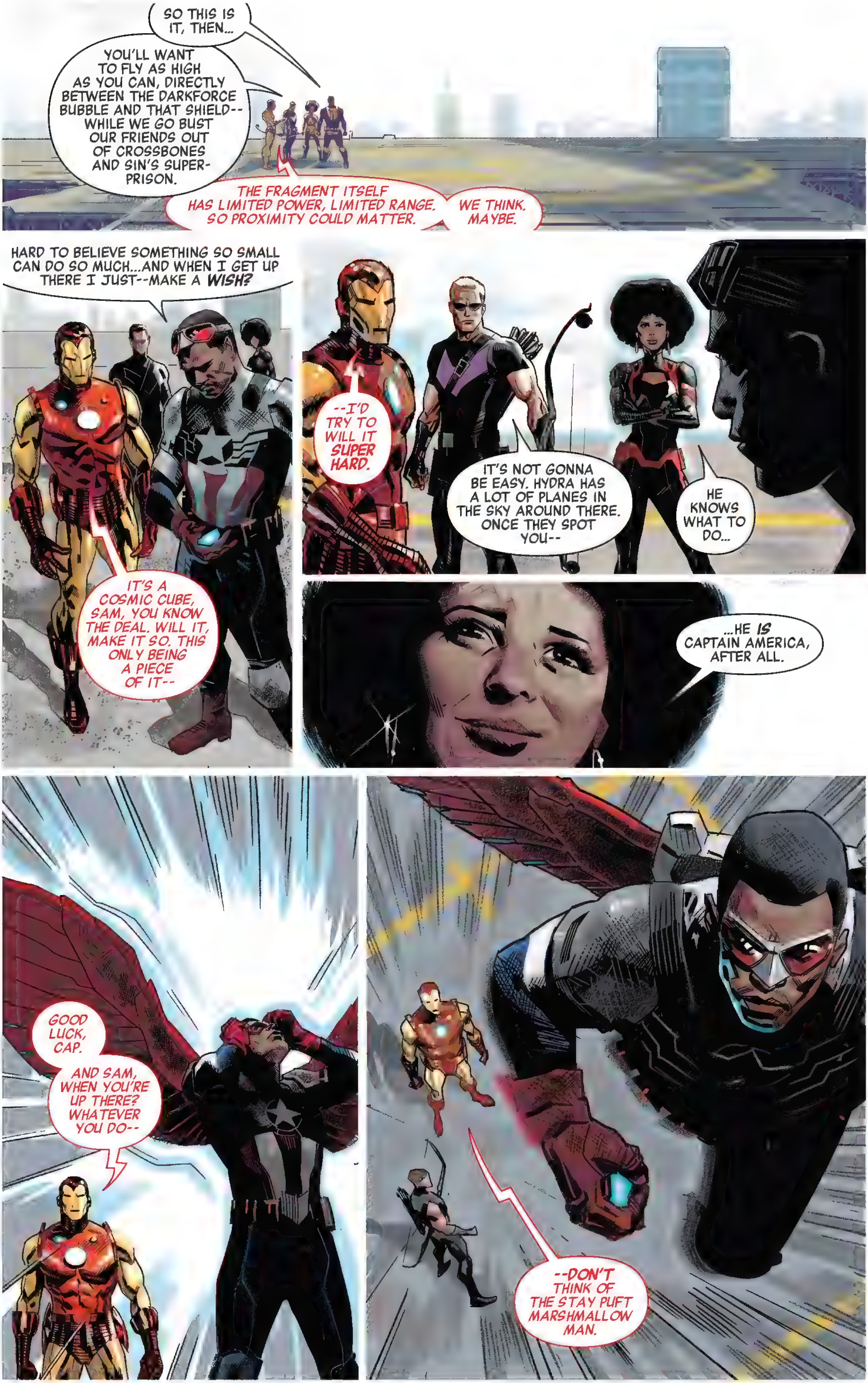
DOCTOR STRANGE

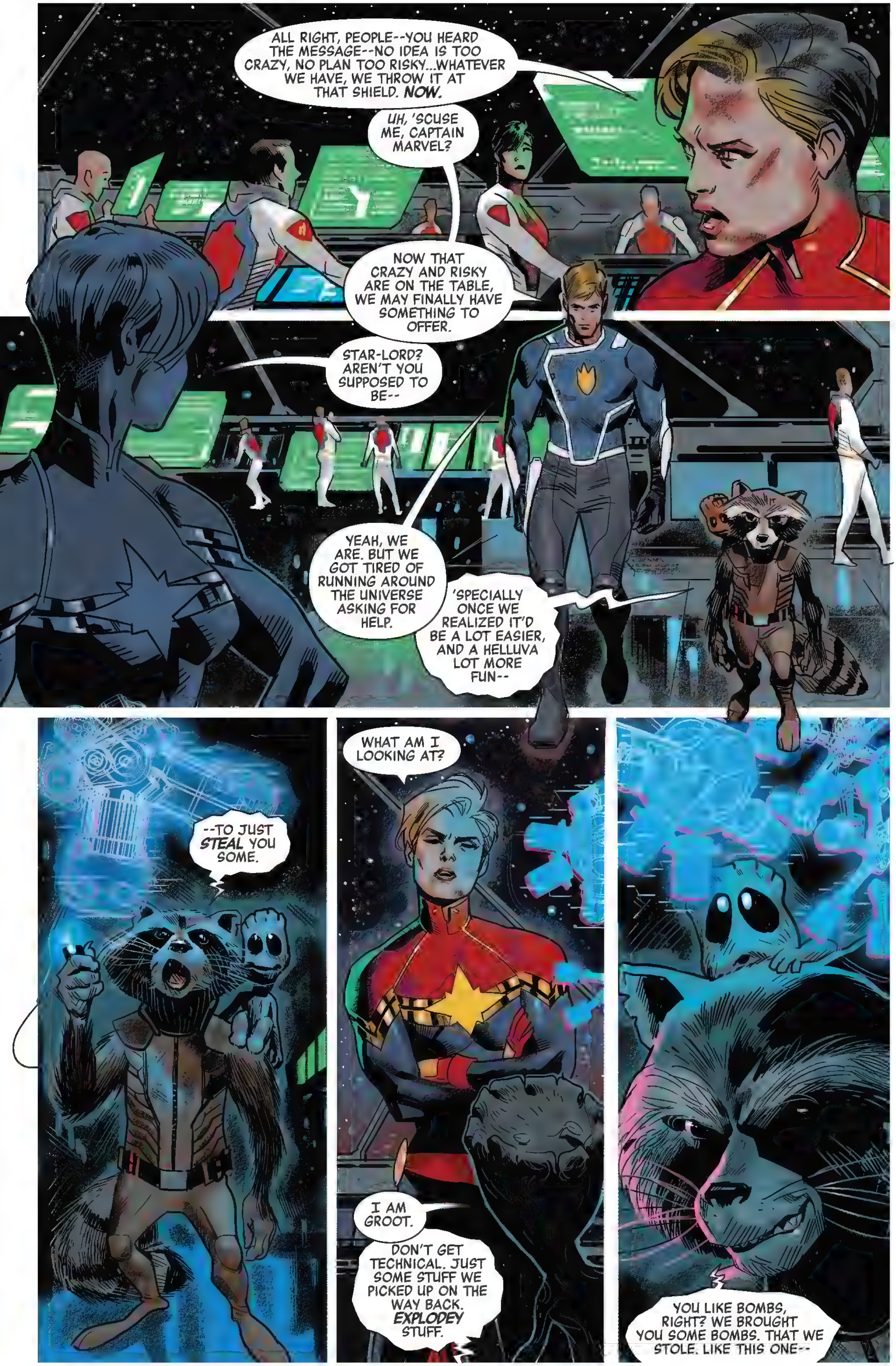


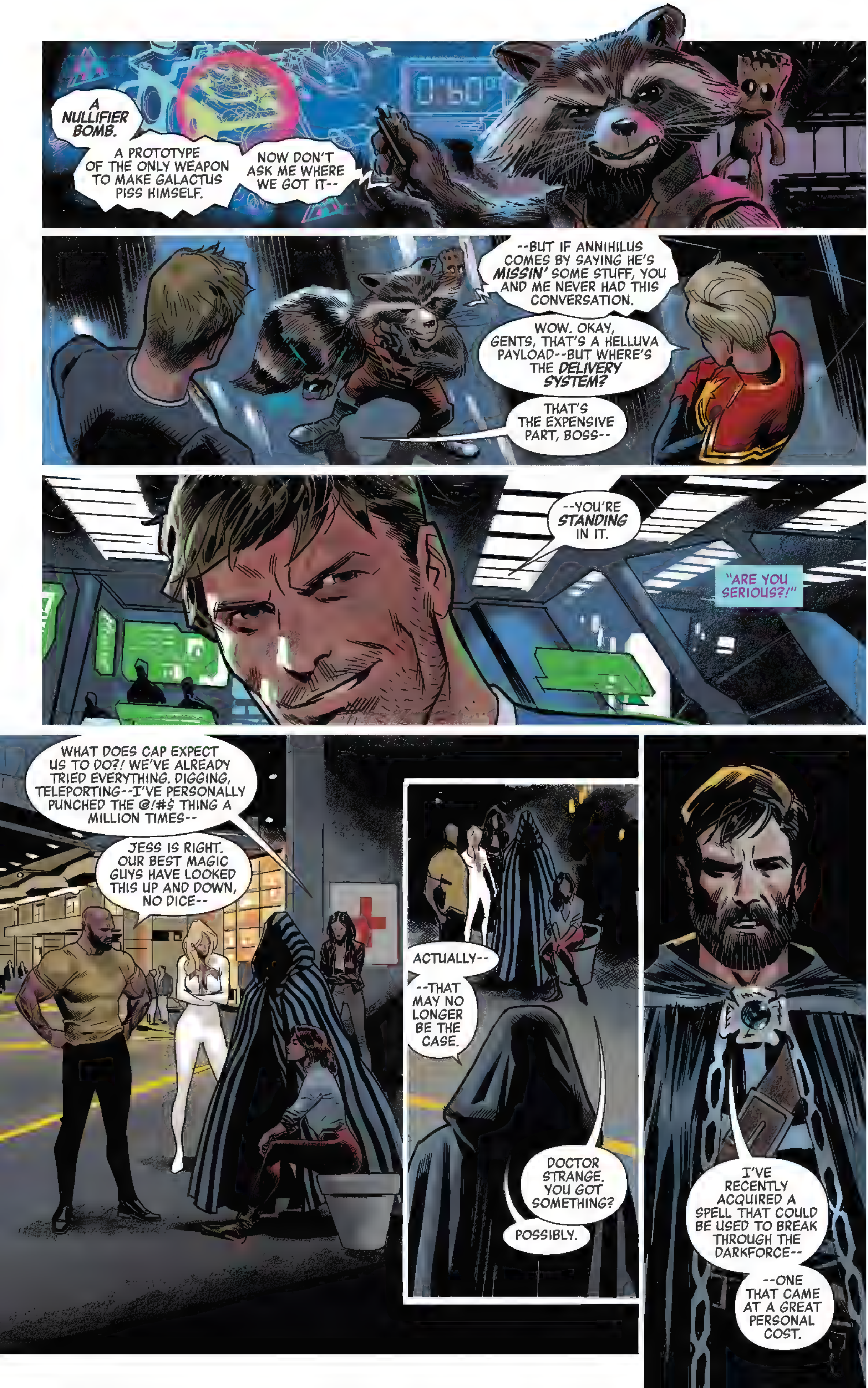
CLOAK

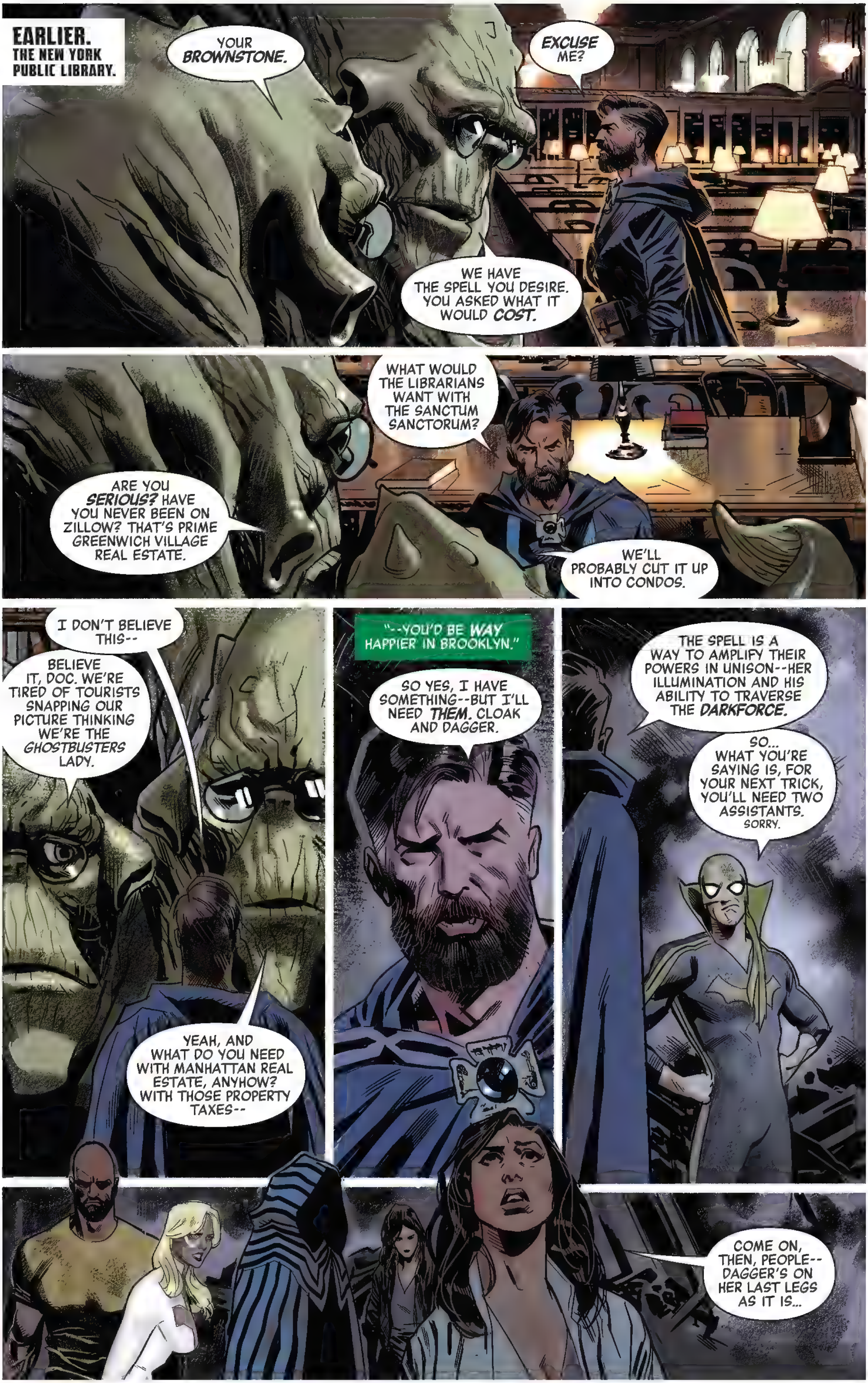


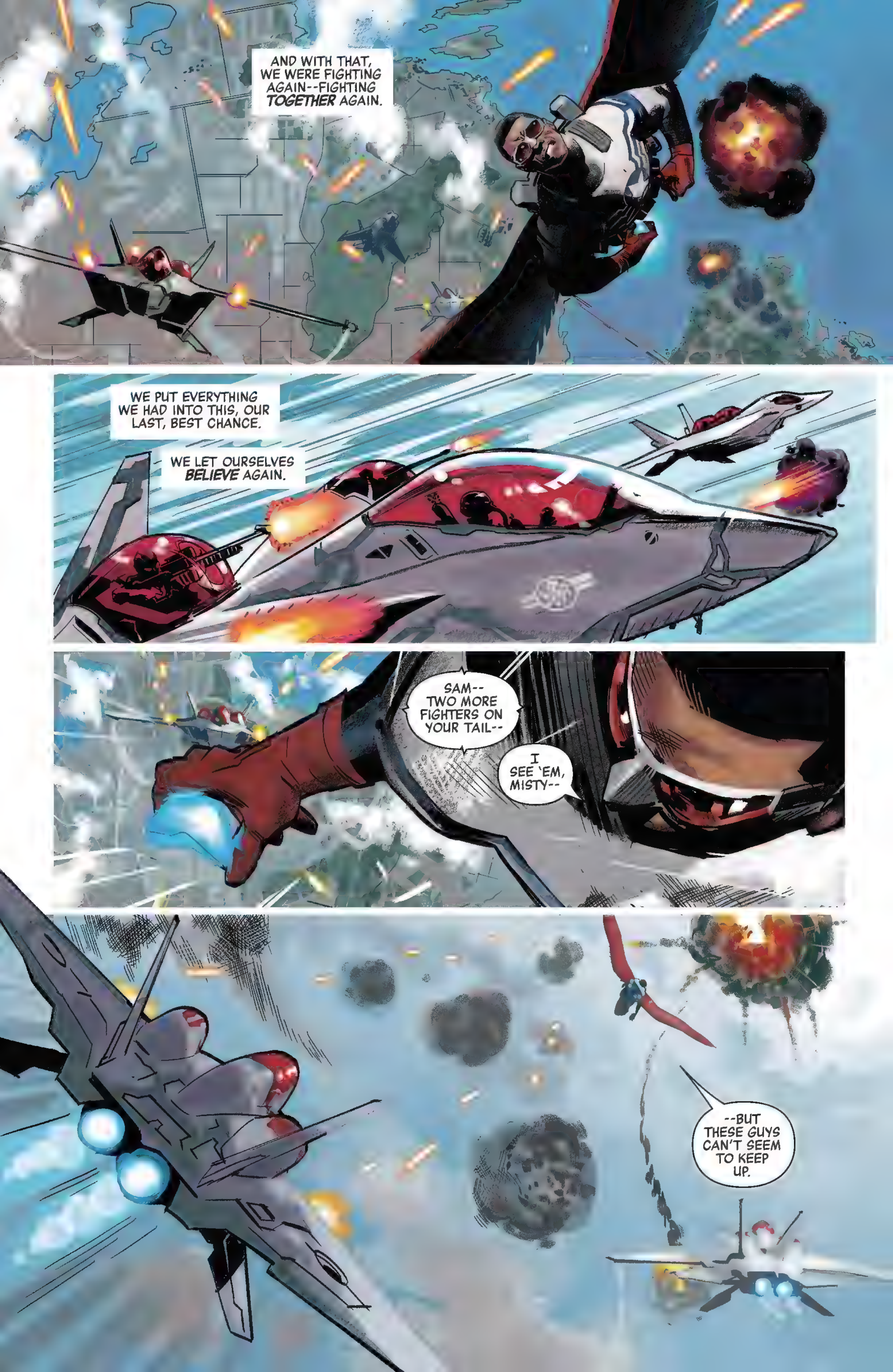
DAGGER

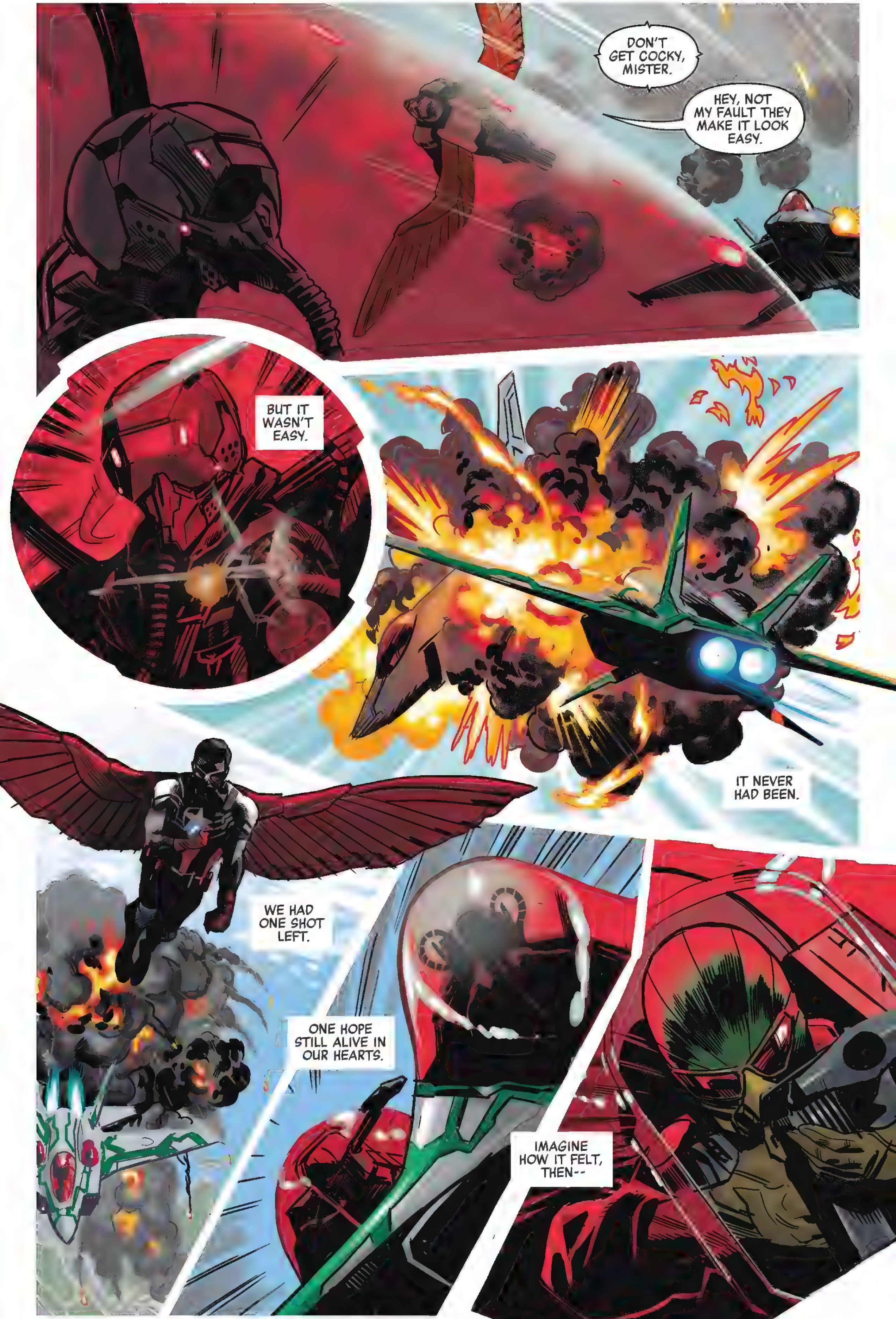

SO THIS IS IT, THEN...
YOU'LL WANT TO FLY AS HIGH AS YOU CAN, DIRECTLY BETWEEN THE DARKFORCE BUBBLE AND THAT SHIELD--WHILE WE GO BUST OUR FRIENDS OUT OF CROSSBONES AND SIN'S SUPER-PRISON.
THE FRAGMENT ITSELF HAS LIMITED POWER, LIMITED RANGE. SO PROXIMITY COULD MATTER.
WE THINK. MAYBE.
HARD TO BELIEVE SOMETHING SO SMALL CAN DO SO MUCH...AND WHEN I GET UP THERE I JUST--MAKE A *WISH?*
IT'S A COSMIC CUBE, SAM, YOU KNOW THE DEAL. WILL IT, MAKE IT SO. THIS ONLY BEING A PIECE OF IT--
--I'D TRY TO WILL IT *SUPER HARD.*
IT'S NOT GONNA BE EASY. HYDRA HAS A LOT OF PLANES IN THE SKY AROUND THERE. ONCE THEY SPOT YOU--
HE KNOWS WHAT TO DO...
...HE *IS* CAPTAIN AMERICA, AFTER ALL.
GOOD LUCK, CAP.
AND SAM, WHEN YOU'RE UP THERE? WHATEVER YOU DO--
--DON'T THINK OF THE STAY PUFT MARSHMALLOW MAN.

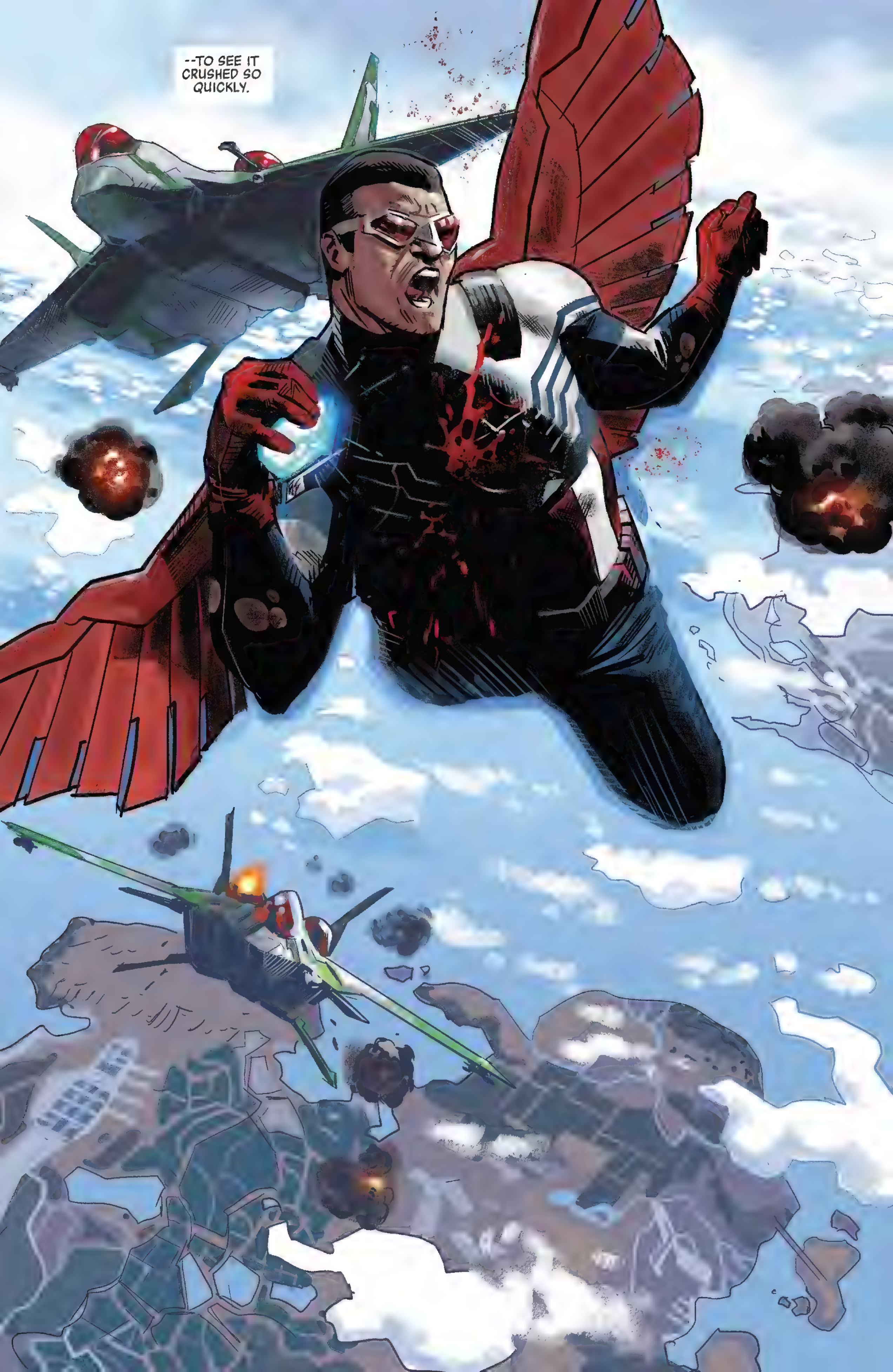

ALL RIGHT, PEOPLE--YOU HEARD THE MESSAGE--NO IDEA IS TOO CRAZY, NO PLAN TOO RISKY...WHATEVER WE HAVE, WE THROW IT AT THAT SHIELD. *NOW.*
UH, 'SCUSE ME, CAPTAIN MARVEL?
NOW THAT CRAZY AND RISKY ARE ON THE TABLE, WE MAY FINALLY HAVE SOMETHING TO OFFER.
STAR-LORD? AREN'T YOU SUPPOSED TO BE--
YEAH, WE ARE. BUT WE GOT TIRED OF RUNNING AROUND THE UNIVERSE ASKING FOR HELP.
'SPECIALLY ONCE WE REALIZED IT'D BE A LOT EASIER, AND A HELLUVA LOT MORE FUN--
--TO JUST *STEAL* YOU SOME.
WHAT AM I LOOKING AT?
I AM GROOT.
DON'T GET TECHNICAL. JUST SOME STUFF WE PICKED UP ON THE WAY BACK. *EXPLODEY* STUFF.
YOU LIKE BOMBS, RIGHT? WE BROUGHT YOU SOME BOMBS. THAT WE STOLE. LIKE THIS ONE--

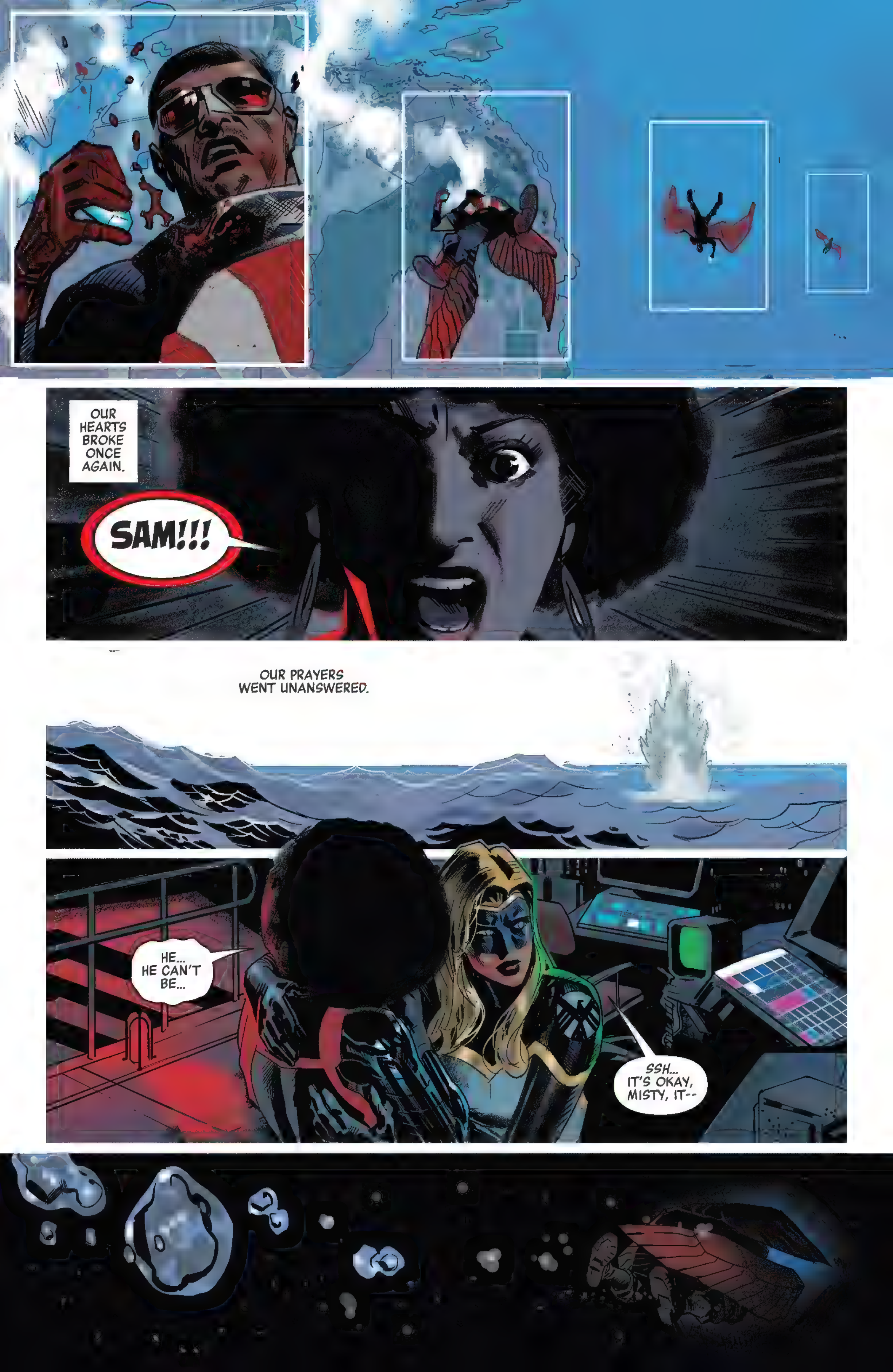

A NULLIFIER BOMB.
A PROTOTYPE OF THE ONLY WEAPON TO MAKE GALACTUS PISS HIMSELF.
NOW DON'T ASK ME WHERE WE GOT IT--
--BUT IF ANNIHILUS COMES BY SAYING HE'S *MISSIN'* SOME STUFF, YOU AND ME NEVER HAD THIS CONVERSATION.
WOW. OKAY, GENTS, THAT'S A HELLUVA PAYLOAD--BUT WHERE'S THE *DELIVERY SYSTEM?*
THAT'S THE EXPENSIVE PART, BOSS--
--YOU'RE *STANDING* IN IT.
"ARE YOU SERIOUS?!"
WHAT DOES CAP EXPECT US TO DO?! WE'VE ALREADY TRIED EVERYTHING. DIGGING, TELEPORTING--I'VE PERSONALLY PUNCHED THE @!#$ THING A MILLION TIMES--
JESS IS RIGHT. OUR BEST MAGIC GUYS HAVE LOOKED THIS UP AND DOWN, NO DICE--
ACTUALLY--
--THAT MAY NO LONGER BE THE CASE.
DOCTOR STRANGE. YOU GOT SOMETHING?
POSSIBLY.
I'VE RECENTLY ACQUIRED A SPELL THAT COULD BE USED TO BREAK THROUGH THE DARKFORCE--
--ONE THAT CAME AT A GREAT PERSONAL COST.

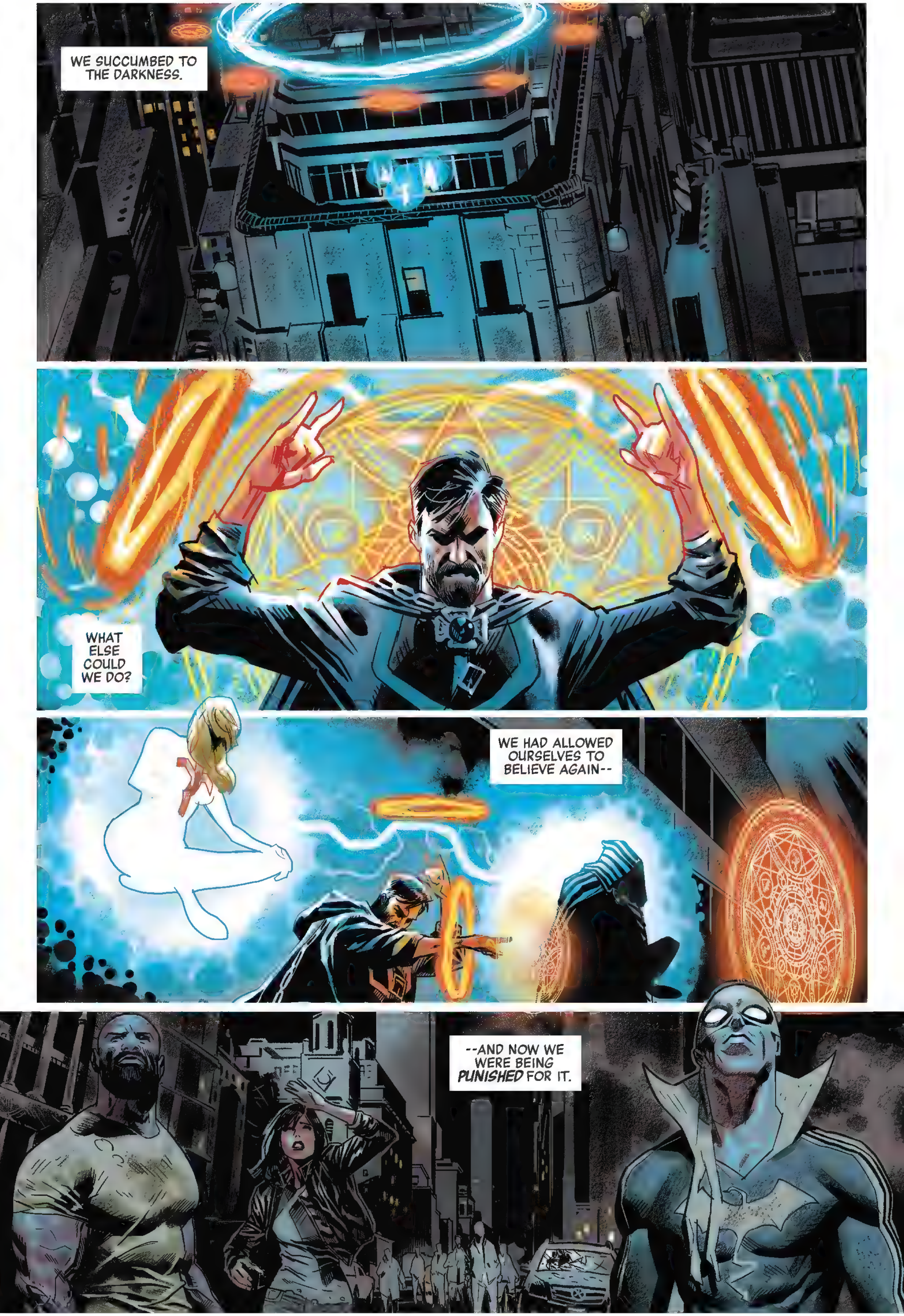

EARLIER. THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY.
YOUR *BROWNSTONE.*
*EXCUSE* ME?
WE HAVE THE SPELL YOU DESIRE. YOU ASKED WHAT IT WOULD *COST.*
WHAT WOULD THE LIBRARIANS WANT WITH THE SANCTUM SANCTORUM?
ARE YOU *SERIOUS?* HAVE YOU NEVER BEEN ON ZILLOW? THAT'S PRIME GREENWICH VILLAGE REAL ESTATE.
WE'LL PROBABLY CUT IT UP INTO CONDOS.
I DON'T BELIEVE THIS--
BELIEVE IT, DOC. WE'RE TIRED OF TOURISTS SNAPPING OUR PICTURE THINKING WE'RE THE *GHOSTBUSTERS* LADY.
YEAH, AND WHAT DO YOU NEED WITH MANHATTAN REAL ESTATE, ANYHOW? WITH THOSE PROPERTY TAXES--
"--YOU'D BE *WAY* HAPPIER IN BROOKLYN."
SO YES, I HAVE SOMETHING--BUT I'LL NEED *THEM.* CLOAK AND DAGGER.
THE SPELL IS A WAY TO AMPLIFY THEIR POWERS IN UNISON--HER ILLUMINATION AND HIS ABILITY TO TRAVERSE THE *DARKFORCE.*
SO... WHAT YOU'RE SAYING IS, FOR YOUR NEXT TRICK, YOU'LL NEED TWO ASSISTANTS. SORRY.
COME ON, THEN, PEOPLE-- DAGGER'S ON HER LAST LEGS AS IT IS...

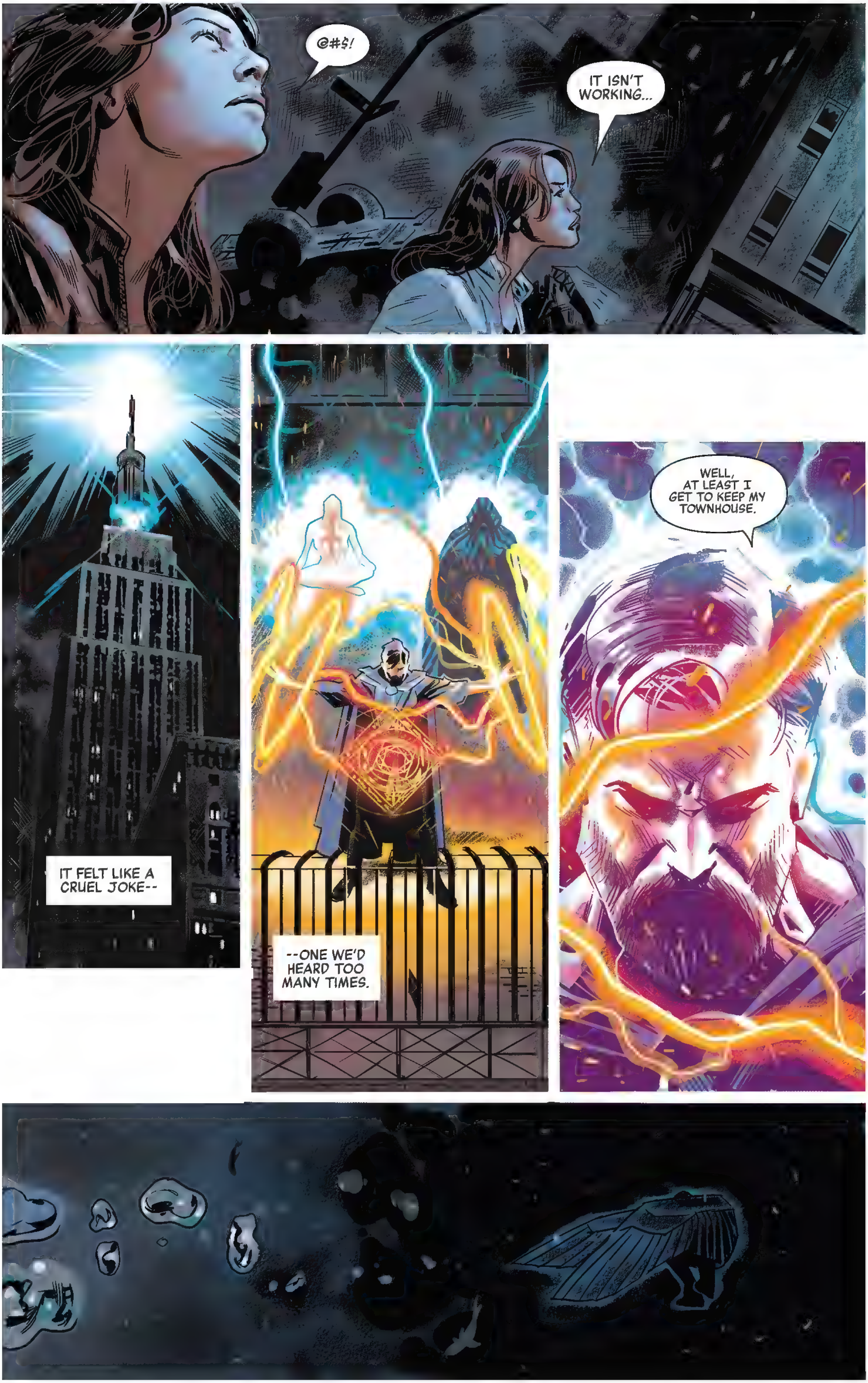

AND WITH THAT, WE WERE FIGHTING AGAIN--FIGHTING *TOGETHER* AGAIN.
WE PUT EVERYTHING WE HAD INTO THIS, OUR LAST, BEST CHANCE.
WE LET OURSELVES *BELIEVE* AGAIN.
SAM-- TWO MORE FIGHTERS ON YOUR TAIL--
I SEE 'EM, MISTY--
--BUT THESE GUYS CAN'T SEEM TO KEEP UP.

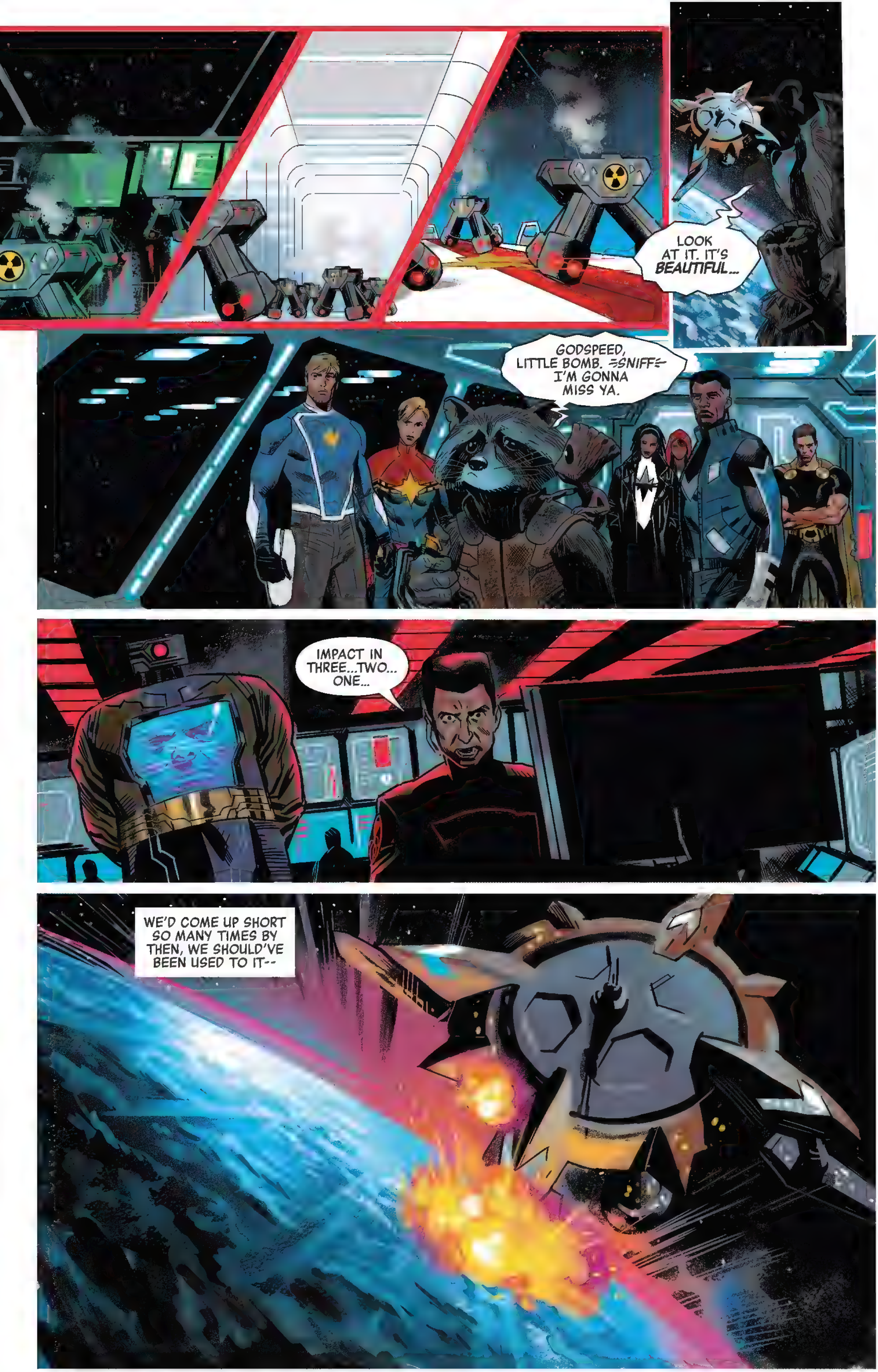

DON'T GET COCKY, MISTER.
HEY, NOT MY FAULT THEY MAKE IT LOOK EASY.
BUT IT WASN'T EASY.
IT NEVER HAD BEEN.
WE HAD ONE SHOT LEFT.
ONE HOPE STILL ALIVE IN OUR HEARTS.
IMAGINE HOW IT FELT, THEN--

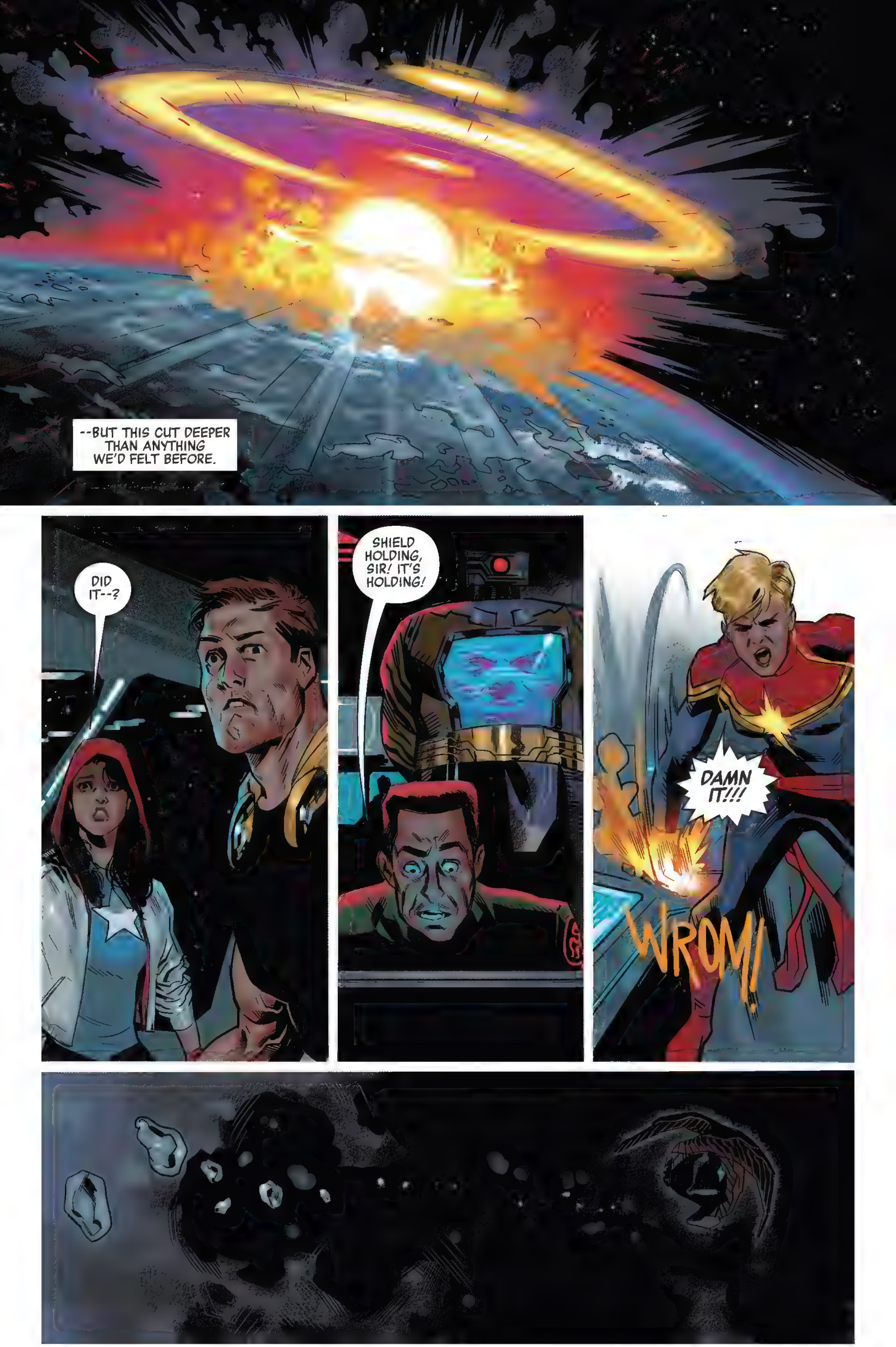

--TO SEE IT CRUSHED SO QUICKLY.

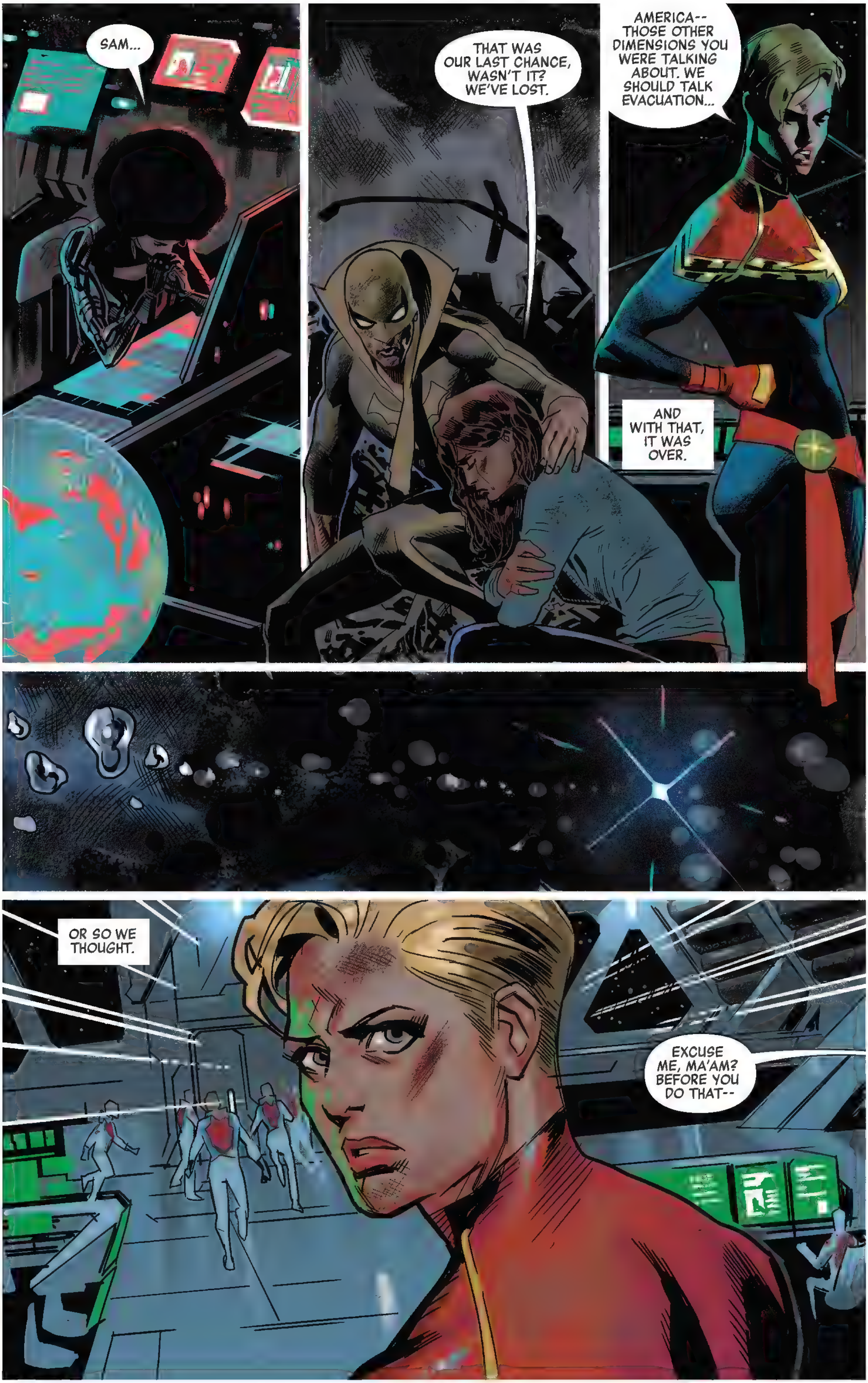

OUR HEARTS BROKE ONCE AGAIN.
SAM!!!
OUR PRAYERS WENT UNANSWERED.
HE... HE CAN'T BE...
SSH... IT'S OKAY, MISTY, IT--

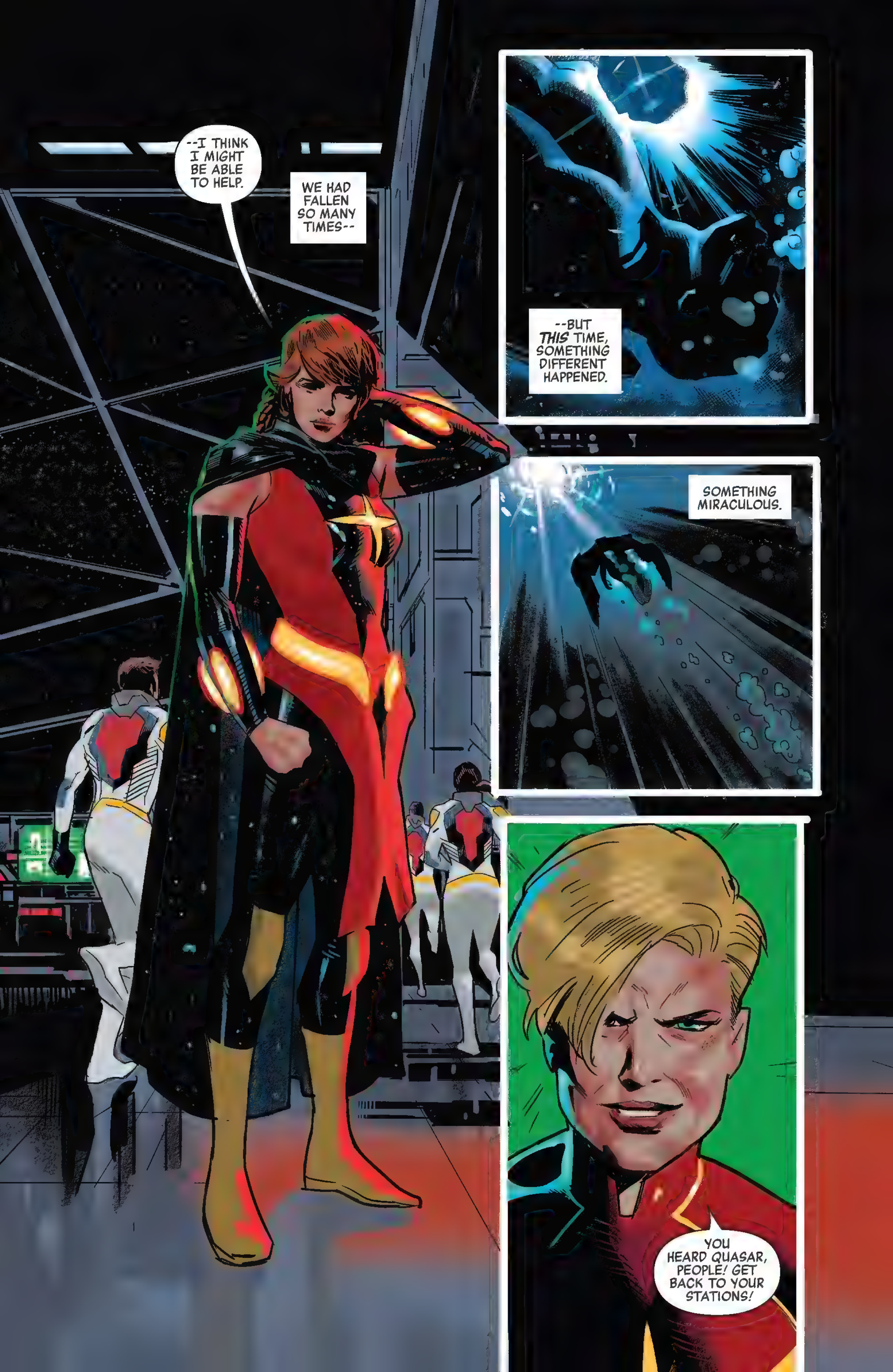

WE SUCCUMBED TO THE DARKNESS.
WHAT ELSE COULD WE DO?
WE HAD ALLOWED OURSELVES TO BELIEVE AGAIN--
--AND NOW WE WERE BEING *PUNISHED* FOR IT.

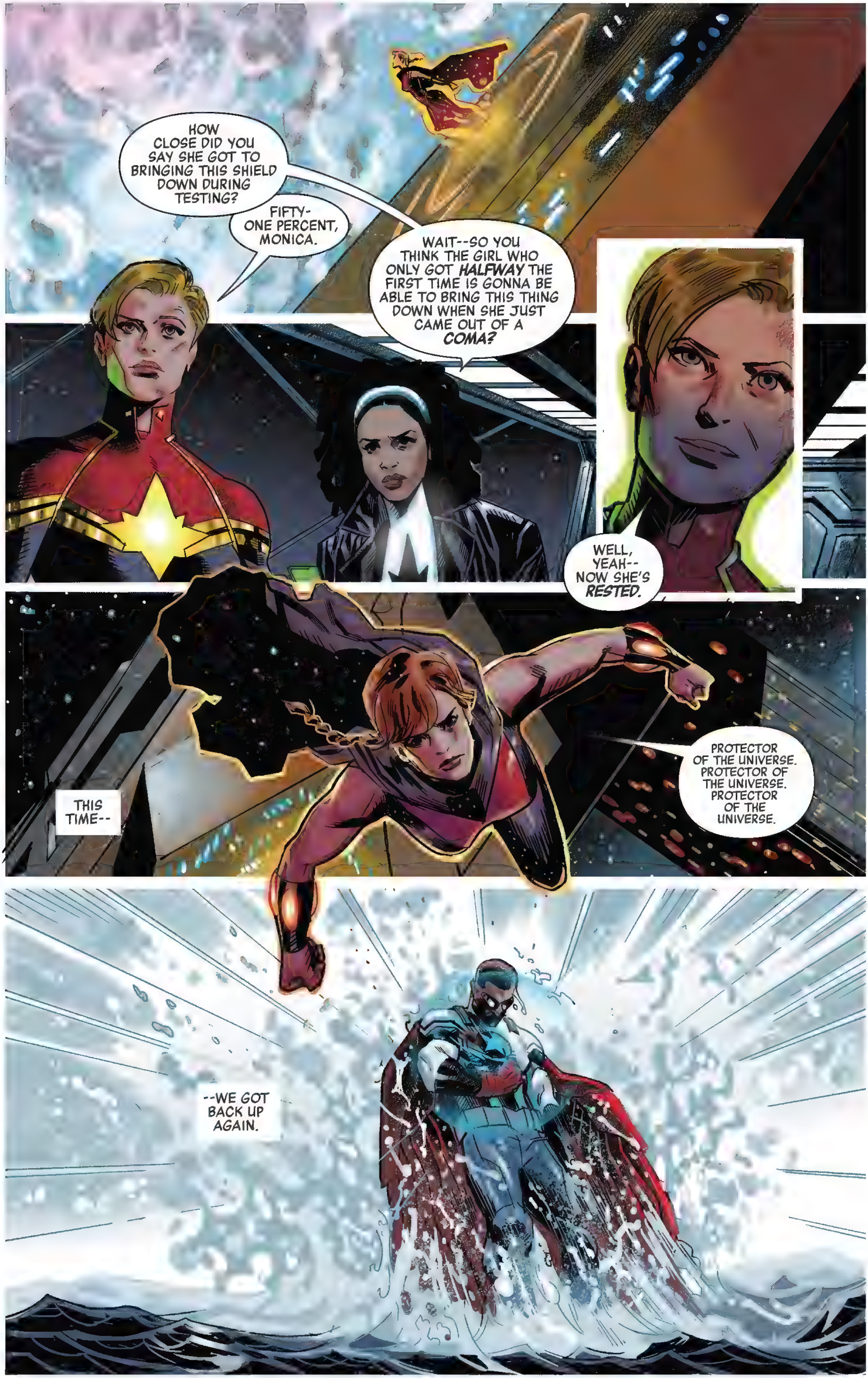

@#$!
IT ISN'T WORKING...
IT FELT LIKE A CRUEL JOKE--
--ONE WE'D HEARD TOO MANY TIMES.
WELL, AT LEAST I GET TO KEEP MY TOWNHOUSE.

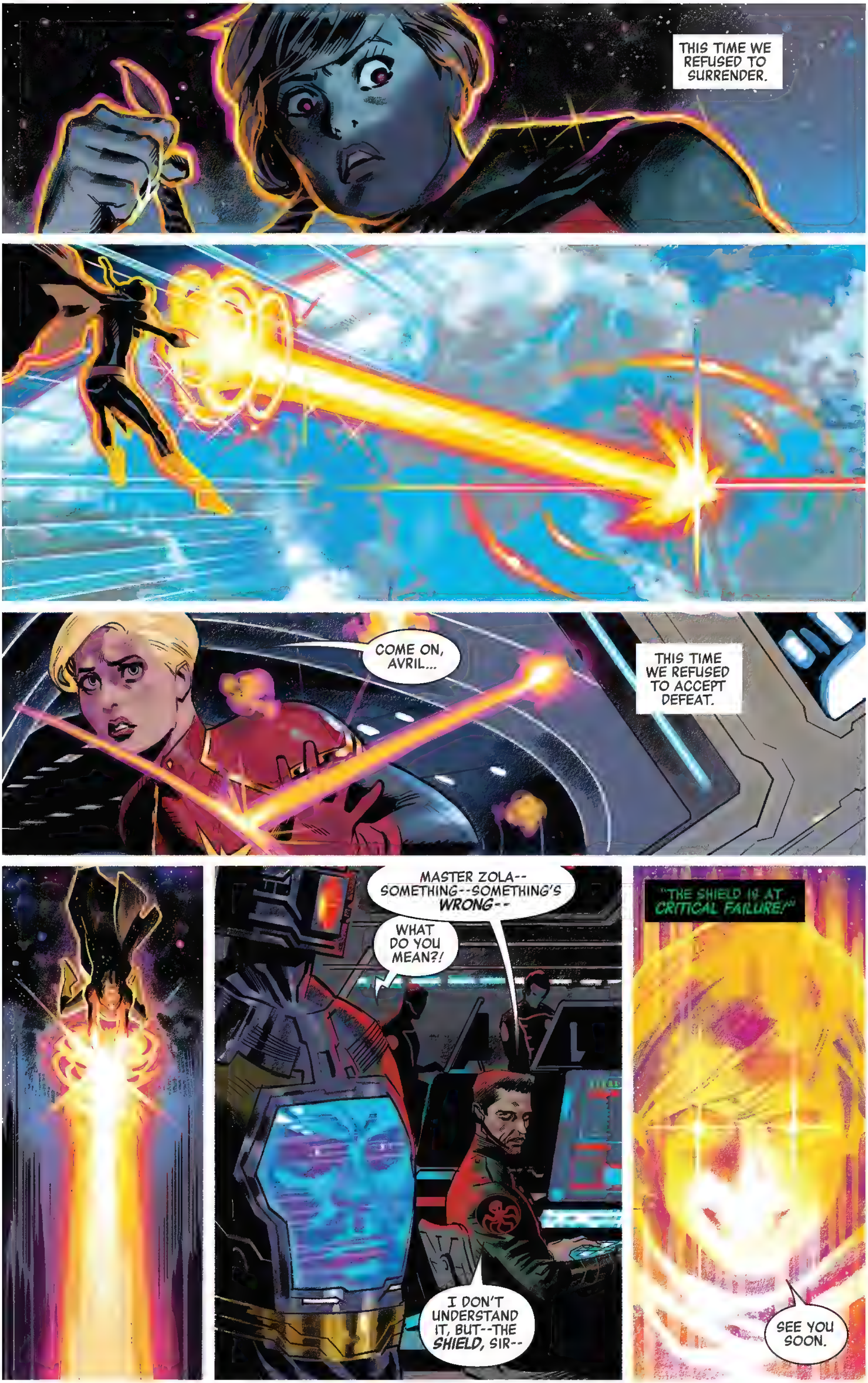

LOOK AT IT. IT'S *BEAUTIFUL*...
GODSPEED, LITTLE BOMB. =SNIFF= I'M GONNA MISS YA.
IMPACT IN THREE...TWO... ONE...
WE'D COME UP SHORT SO MANY TIMES BY THEN, WE SHOULD'VE BEEN USED TO IT--


--BUT THIS CUT DEEPER THAN ANYTHING WE'D FELT BEFORE.
DID IT--?
SHIELD HOLDING, SIR! IT'S HOLDING!
DAMN IT!!!
WROM!

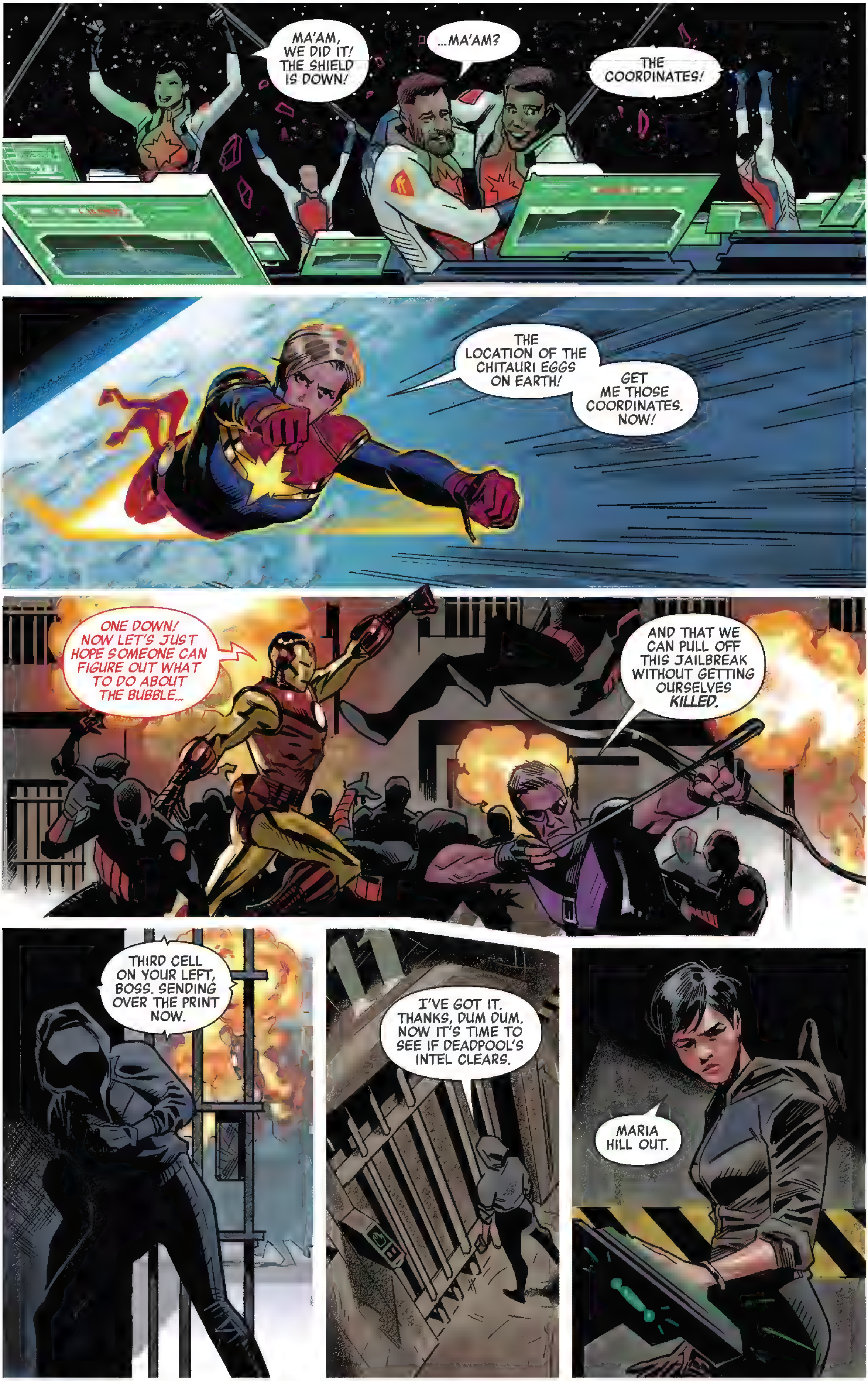

SAM...
THAT WAS OUR LAST CHANCE, WASN'T IT? WE'VE LOST.
AMERICA-- THOSE OTHER DIMENSIONS YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT. WE SHOULD TALK EVACUATION...
AND WITH THAT, IT WAS OVER.
OR SO WE THOUGHT.
EXCUSE ME, MA'AM? BEFORE YOU DO THAT--

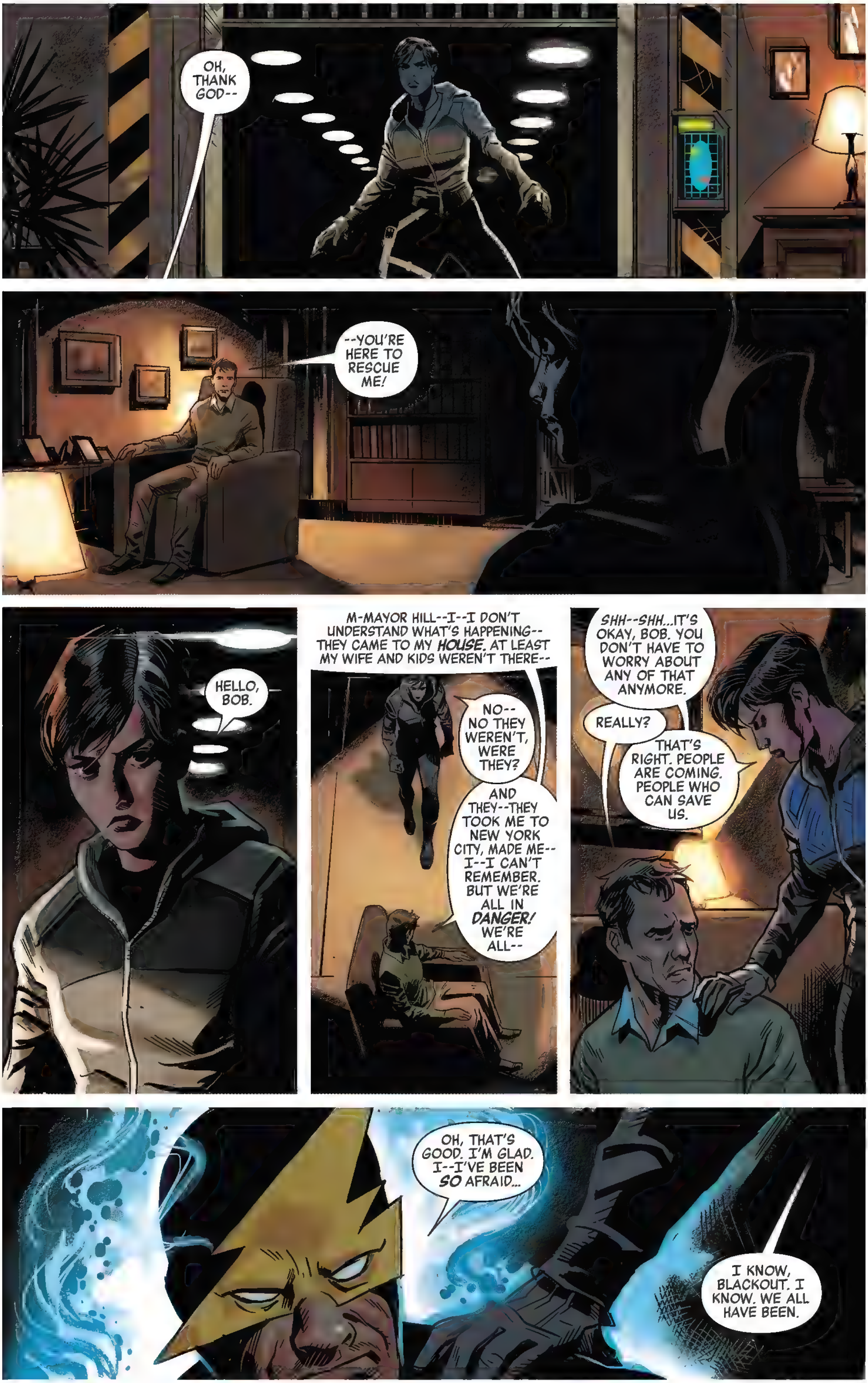

--I THINK I MIGHT BE ABLE TO HELP.
WE HAD FALLEN SO MANY TIMES--
--BUT *THIS* TIME, SOMETHING DIFFERENT HAPPENED.
SOMETHING MIRACULOUS.
YOU HEARD QUASAR, PEOPLE! GET BACK TO YOUR STATIONS!

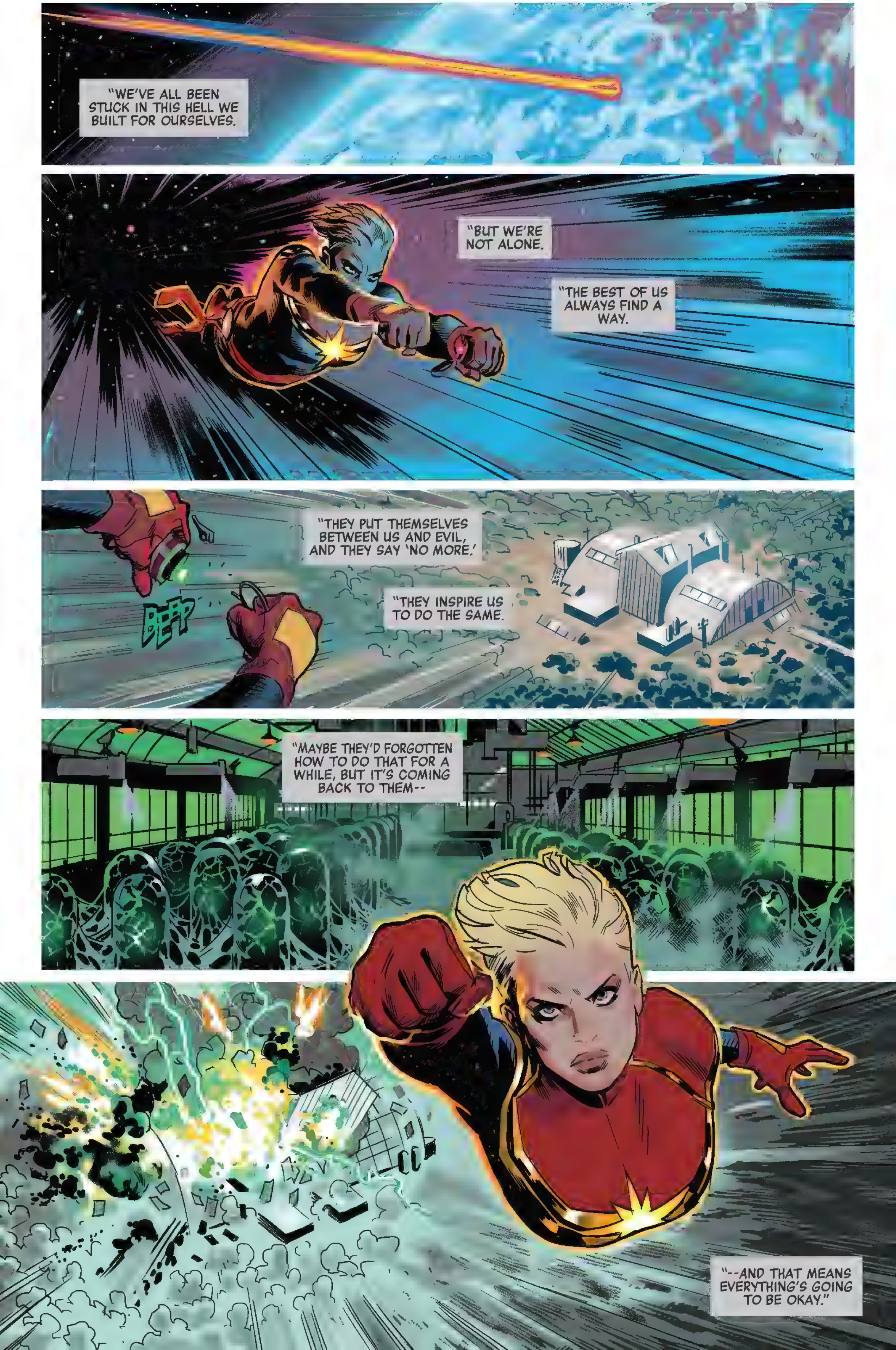

HOW CLOSE DID YOU SAY SHE GOT TO BRINGING THIS SHIELD DOWN DURING TESTING?
FIFTY-ONE PERCENT, MONICA.
WAIT--SO YOU THINK THE GIRL WHO ONLY GOT *HALFWAY* THE FIRST TIME IS GONNA BE ABLE TO BRING THIS THING DOWN WHEN SHE JUST CAME OUT OF A *COMA?*
WELL, YEAH--NOW SHE'S *RESTED.*
THIS TIME--
PROTECTOR OF THE UNIVERSE. PROTECTOR OF THE UNIVERSE. PROTECTOR OF THE UNIVERSE.
--WE GOT BACK UP AGAIN.

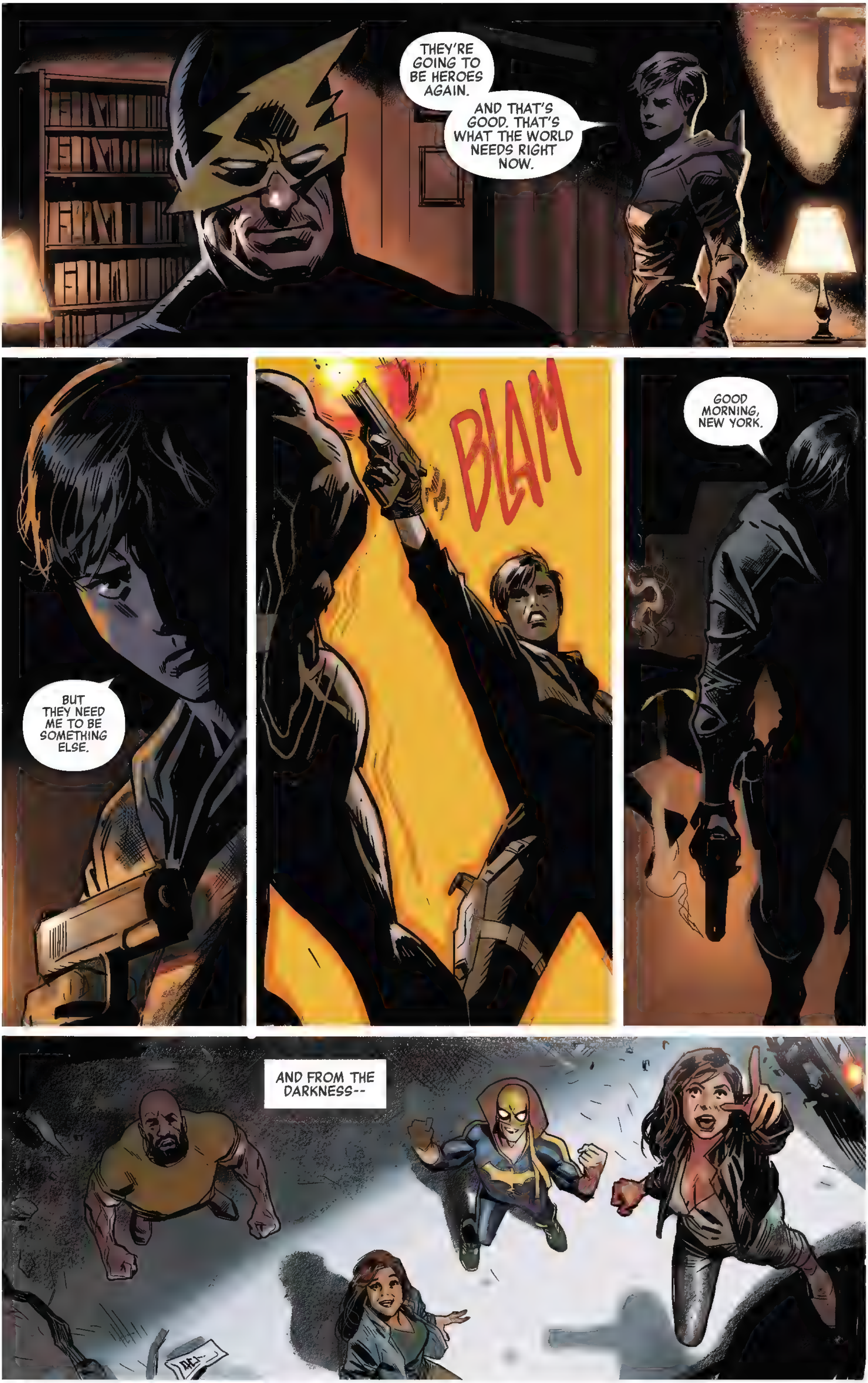

THIS TIME WE REFUSED TO SURRENDER.
COME ON, AVRIL...
THIS TIME WE REFUSED TO ACCEPT DEFEAT.
MASTER ZOLA-- SOMETHING--SOMETHING'S *WRONG*--
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?!
I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT, BUT--THE *SHIELD*, SIR--
"THE SHIELD IS AT CRITICAL FAILURE!"
SEE YOU SOON.

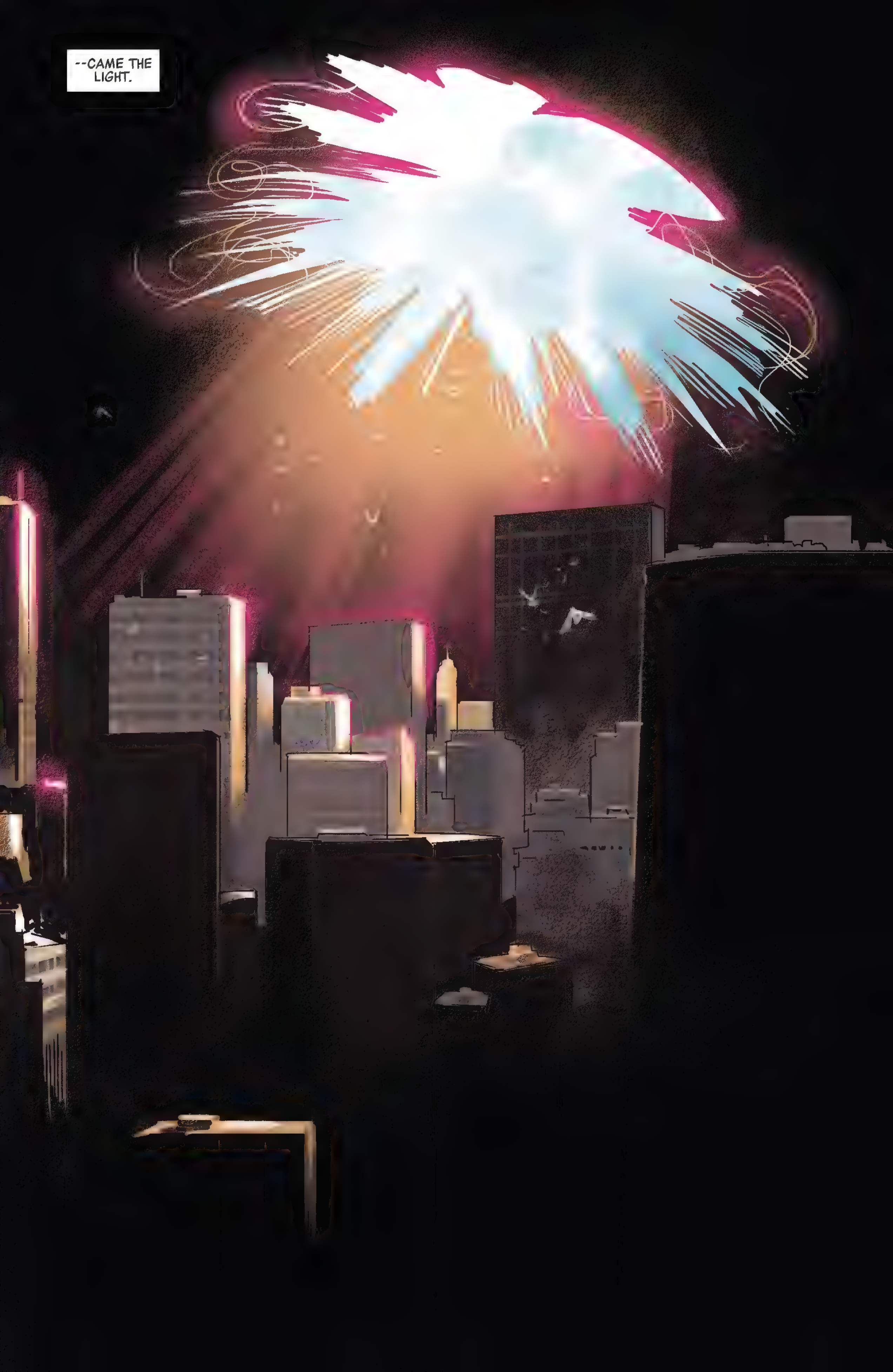
THIS TIME WE HIT BACK.

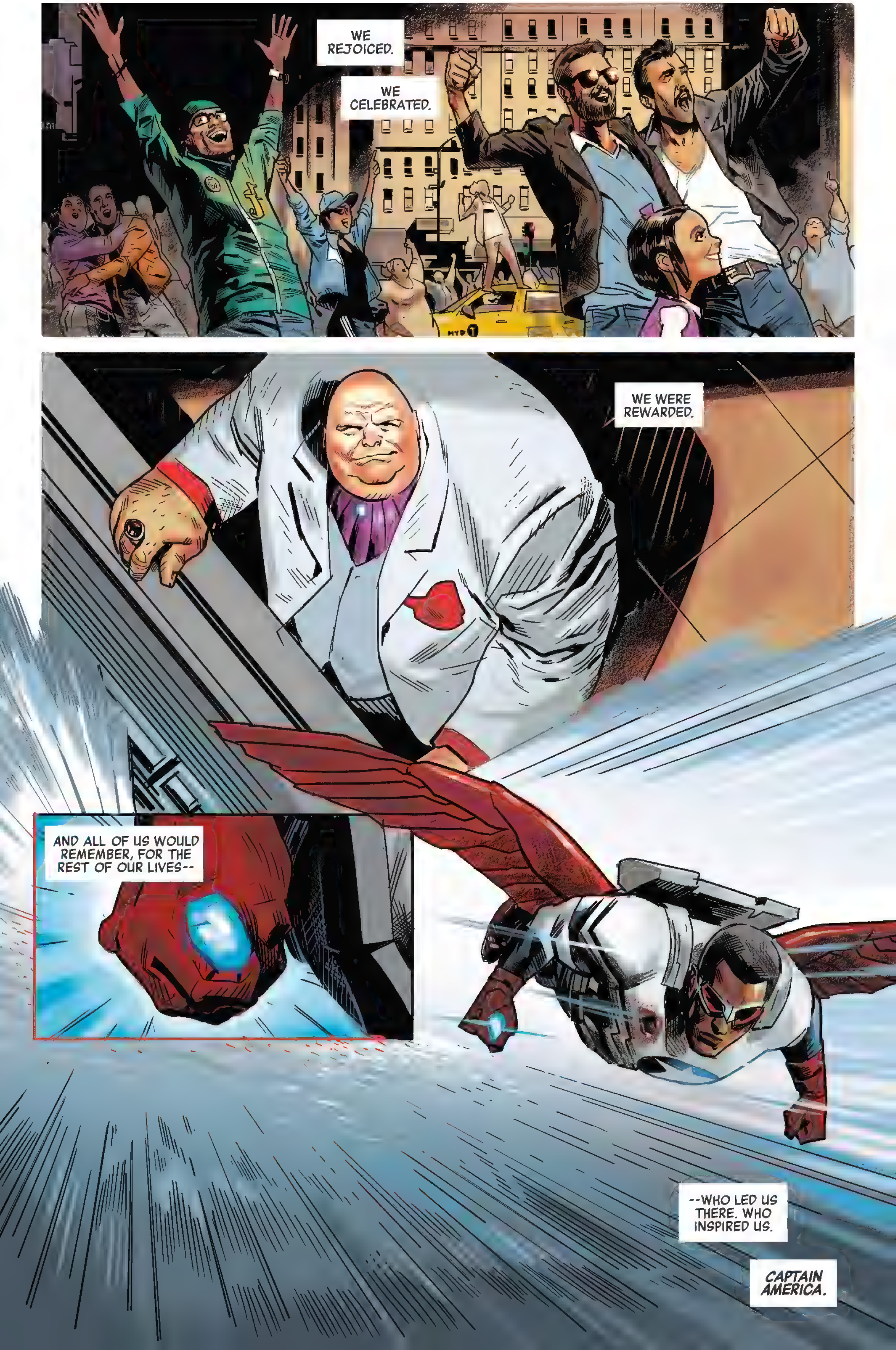

MA'AM, WE DID IT! THE SHIELD IS DOWN!
...MA'AM?
THE COORDINATES!
THE LOCATION OF THE CHITAURI EGGS ON EARTH!
GET ME THOSE COORDINATES. NOW!
ONE DOWN! NOW LET'S JUST HOPE SOMEONE CAN FIGURE OUT WHAT TO DO ABOUT THE BUBBLE...
AND THAT WE CAN PULL OFF THIS JAILBREAK WITHOUT GETTING OURSELVES KILLED.
THIRD CELL ON YOUR LEFT, BOSS. SENDING OVER THE PRINT NOW.
I'VE GOT IT. THANKS, DUM DUM. NOW IT'S TIME TO SEE IF DEADPOOL'S INTEL CLEARS.
MARIA HILL OUT.

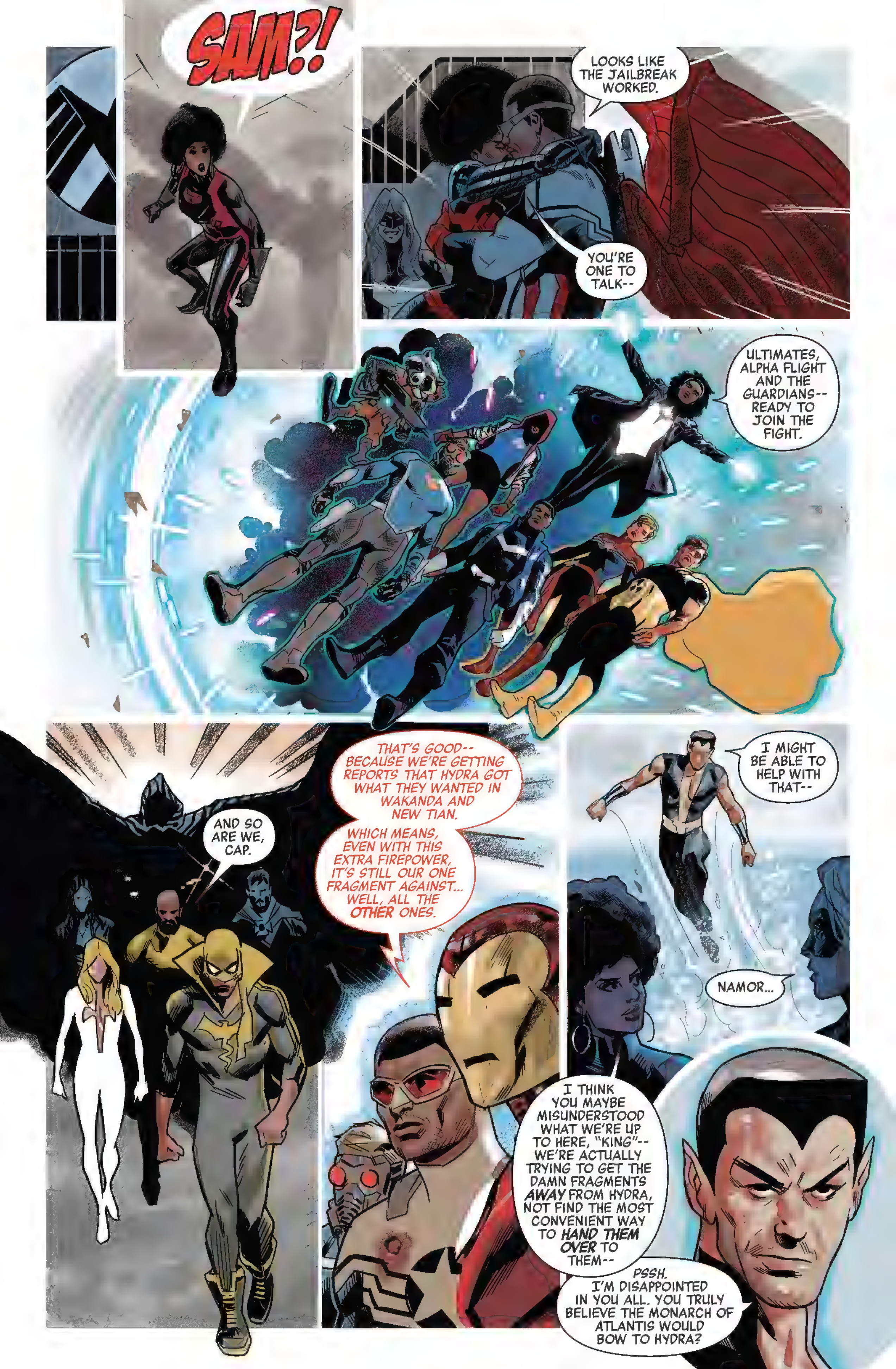

OH, THANK GOD--
--YOU'RE HERE TO RESCUE ME!
HELLO, BOB.
M-MAYOR HILL--I--I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT'S HAPPENING--THEY CAME TO MY *HOUSE*. AT LEAST MY WIFE AND KIDS WEREN'T THERE--
NO--NO THEY WEREN'T, WERE THEY?
AND THEY--THEY TOOK ME TO NEW YORK CITY, MADE ME--I--I CAN'T REMEMBER. BUT WE'RE ALL IN *DANGER!* WE'RE ALL--
*SHH--SHH*...IT'S OKAY, BOB. YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT ANY OF THAT ANYMORE.
REALLY?
THAT'S RIGHT. PEOPLE ARE COMING. PEOPLE WHO CAN SAVE US.
OH, THAT'S GOOD. I'M GLAD. I--I'VE BEEN *SO* AFRAID...
I KNOW, BLACKOUT. I KNOW. WE ALL HAVE BEEN.

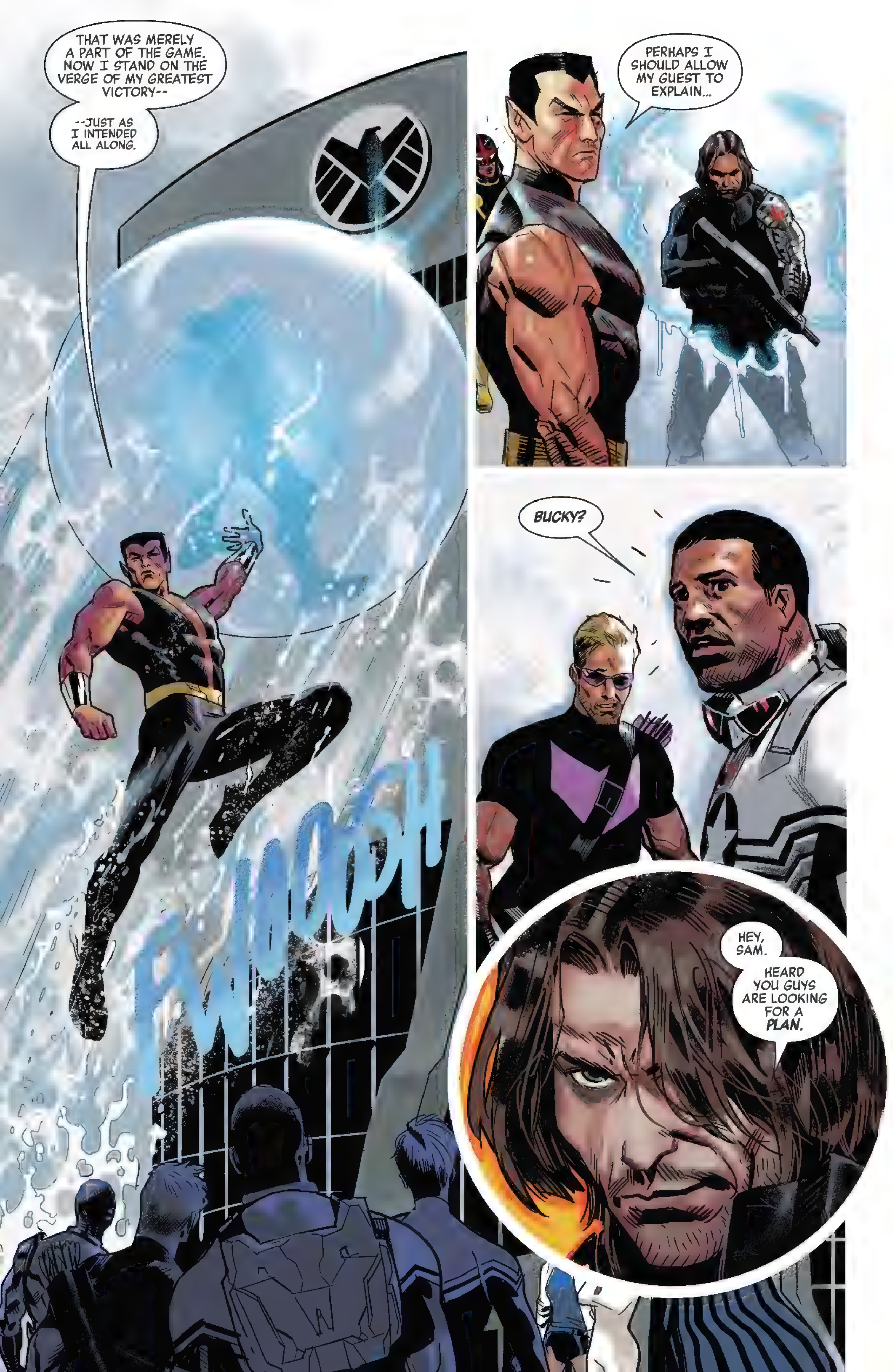

"WE'VE ALL BEEN STUCK IN THIS HELL WE BUILT FOR OURSELVES.
"BUT WE'RE NOT ALONE.
"THE BEST OF US ALWAYS FIND A WAY.
"THEY PUT THEMSELVES BETWEEN US AND EVIL, AND THEY SAY 'NO MORE.'
BEEP
"THEY INSPIRE US TO DO THE SAME.
"MAYBE THEY'D FORGOTTEN HOW TO DO THAT FOR A WHILE, BUT IT'S COMING BACK TO THEM--
"--AND THAT MEANS EVERYTHING'S GOING TO BE OKAY."

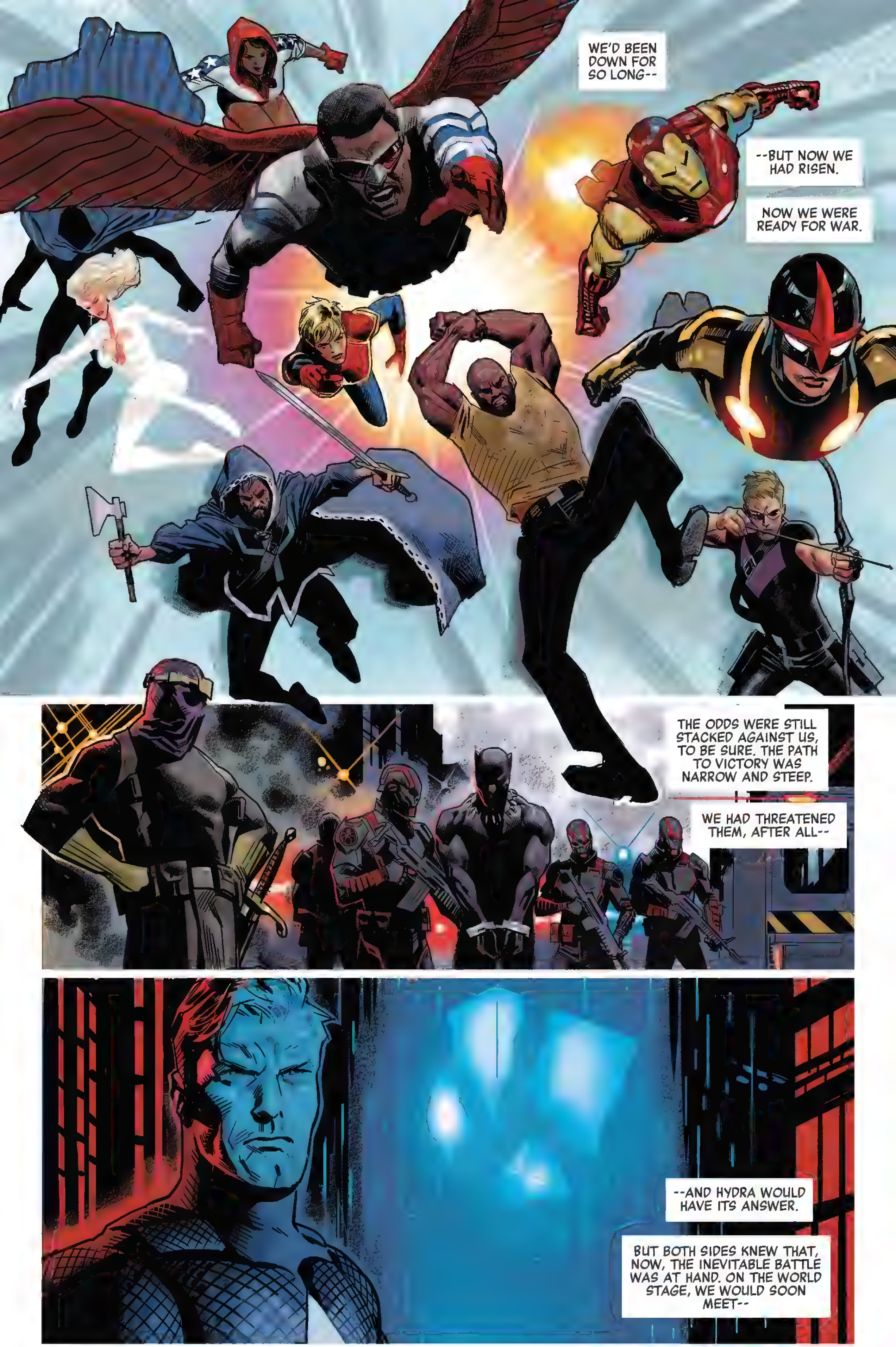

THEY'RE GOING TO BE HEROES AGAIN.
AND THAT'S GOOD. THAT'S WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS RIGHT NOW.
BUT THEY NEED ME TO BE SOMETHING ELSE.
BLAM
GOOD MORNING, NEW YORK.
AND FROM THE DARKNESS--

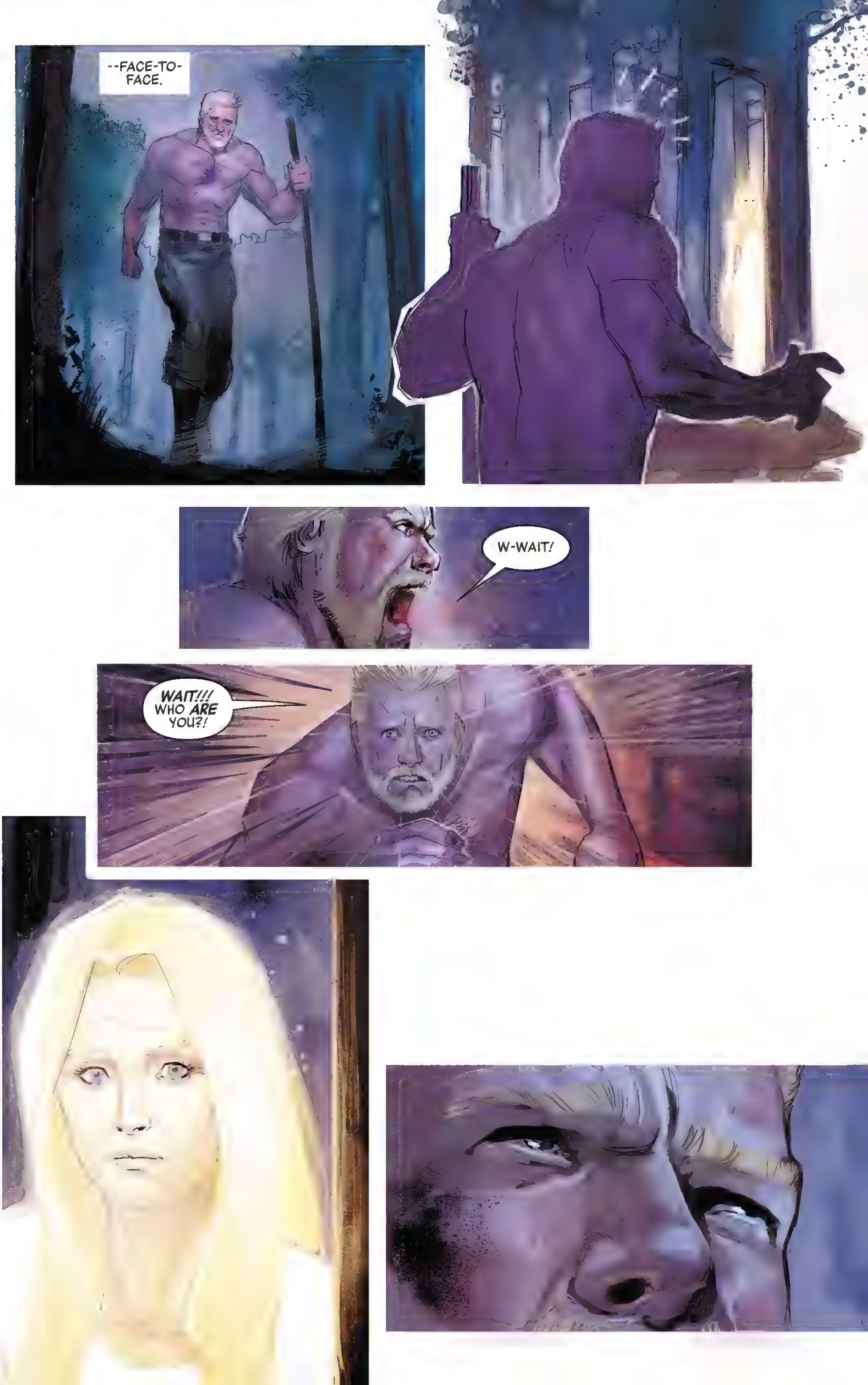

--CAME THE LIGHT.

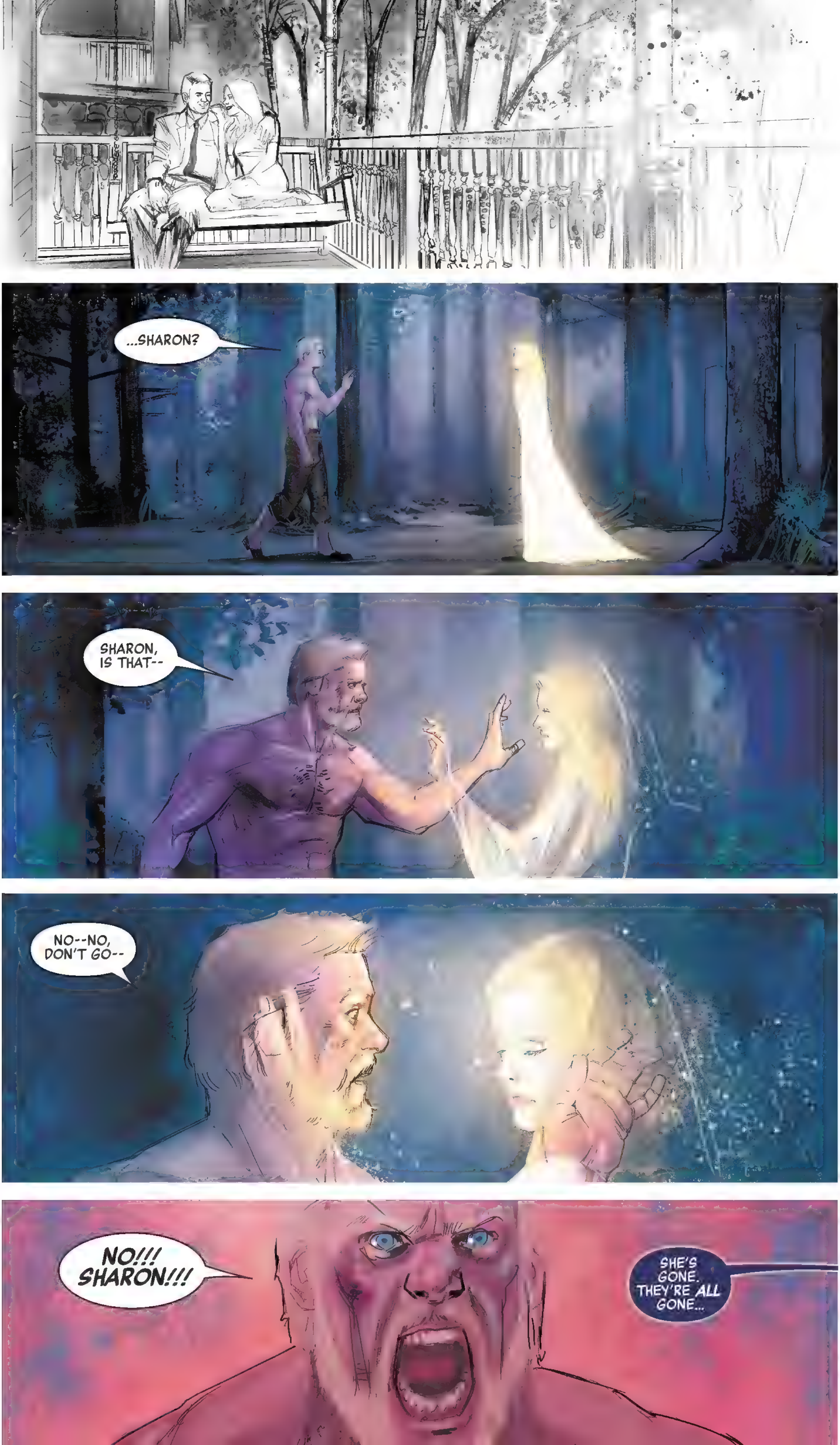

WE REJOICED.
WE CELEBRATED.
WE WERE REWARDED.
AND ALL OF US WOULD REMEMBER, FOR THE REST OF OUR LIVES--
--WHO LED US THERE. WHO INSPIRED US.
CAPTAIN AMERICA.

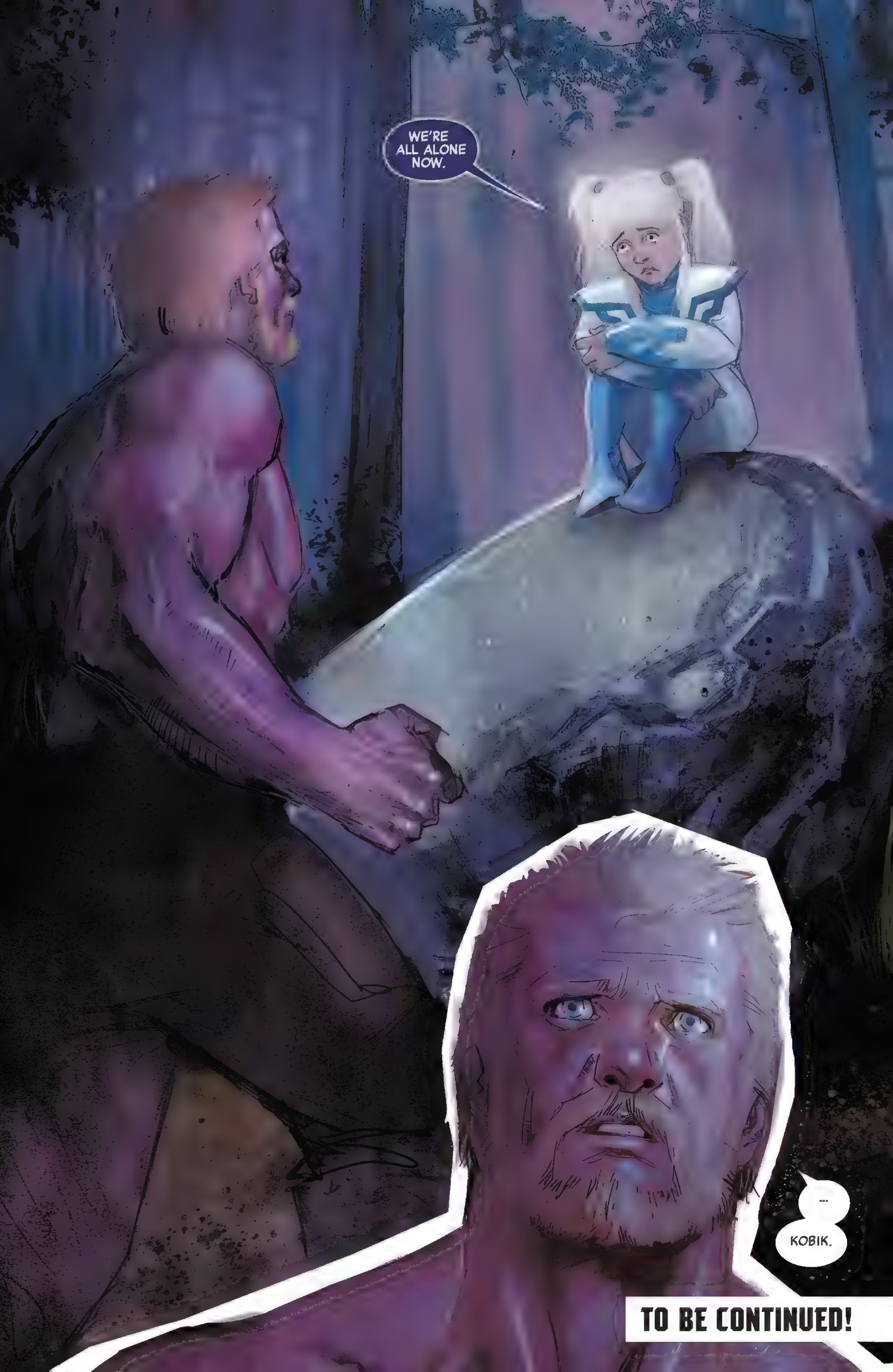

SAM?!
LOOKS LIKE THE JAILBREAK WORKED.
YOU'RE ONE TO TALK--
ULTIMATES, ALPHA FLIGHT AND THE GUARDIANS-- READY TO JOIN THE FIGHT.
AND SO ARE WE, CAP.
THAT'S GOOD-- BECAUSE WE'RE GETTING REPORTS THAT HYDRA GOT WHAT THEY WANTED IN WAKANDA AND NEW TIAN.
WHICH MEANS, EVEN WITH THIS EXTRA FIREPOWER, IT'S STILL OUR ONE FRAGMENT AGAINST... WELL, ALL THE *OTHER* ONES.
I MIGHT BE ABLE TO HELP WITH THAT--
NAMOR...
I THINK YOU MAYBE MISUNDERSTOOD WHAT WE'RE UP TO HERE, "KING"-- WE'RE ACTUALLY TRYING TO GET THE DAMN FRAGMENTS *AWAY* FROM HYDRA, NOT FIND THE MOST CONVENIENT WAY TO *HAND THEM OVER* TO THEM--
*PSSH.* I'M DISAPPOINTED IN YOU ALL. YOU TRULY BELIEVE THE MONARCH OF ATLANTIS WOULD BOW TO HYDRA?


THAT WAS MERELY A PART OF THE GAME. NOW I STAND ON THE VERGE OF MY GREATEST VICTORY--
--JUST AS I INTENDED ALL ALONG.
FWOOSH
PERHAPS I SHOULD ALLOW MY GUEST TO EXPLAIN...
BUCKY?
HEY, SAM.
HEARD YOU GUYS ARE LOOKING FOR A *PLAN.*


WE'D BEEN DOWN FOR SO LONG--
--BUT NOW WE HAD RISEN.
NOW WE WERE READY FOR WAR.
THE ODDS WERE STILL STACKED AGAINST US, TO BE SURE. THE PATH TO VICTORY WAS NARROW AND STEEP.
WE HAD THREATENED THEM, AFTER ALL--
--AND HYDRA WOULD HAVE ITS ANSWER.
BUT BOTH SIDES KNEW THAT, NOW, THE INEVITABLE BATTLE WAS AT HAND. ON THE WORLD STAGE, WE WOULD SOON MEET--


--FACE-TO-FACE.
W-WAIT!
WAIT!!! WHO ARE YOU?!

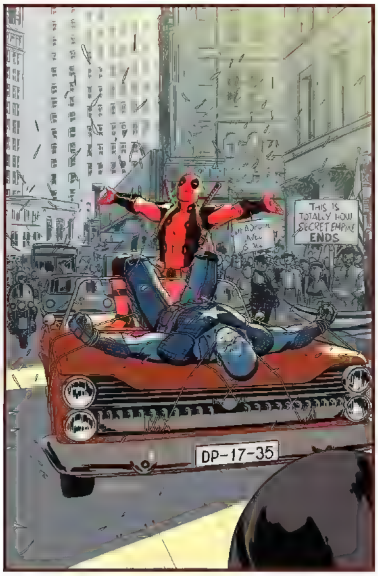

...SHARON?
SHARON, IS THAT--
NO--NO, DON'T GO--
NO!!! SHARON!!!
SHE'S GONE. THEY'RE ALL GONE...


WE'RE ALL ALONE NOW.
...
KOBIK.
TO BE CONTINUED!

# SECRET EMPIRE

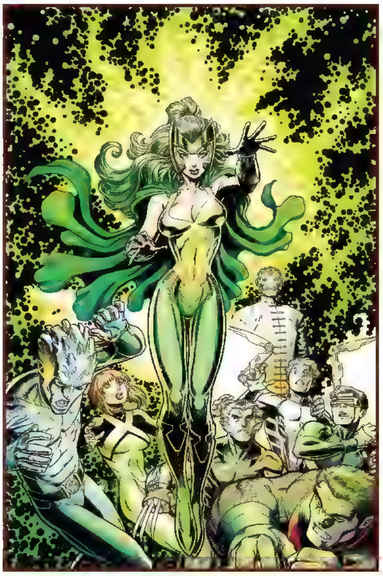
## AUGUST

### DEADPOOL #35


THIS IS TOTALLY HOW SECRET EMPIRE ENDS
DP-17-35

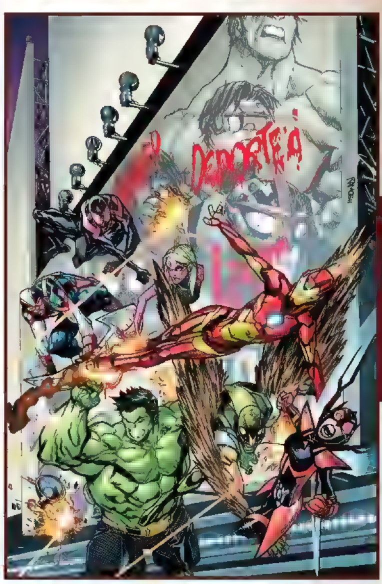
Deadpool sided with Hydra--but that was a bad idea and now he's going to take them down himself! ...Right?

### X-MEN BLUE #9



Jean and Jimmy fight to rescue their teammates from Emma Frost!

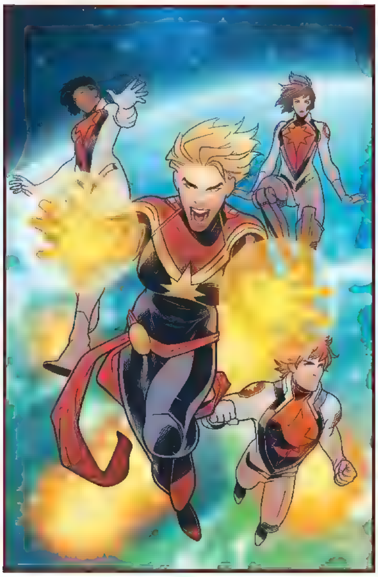
### CHAMPIONS #11



Hope springs from the ruins of Las Vegas.

## BEYOND THE SHIELD

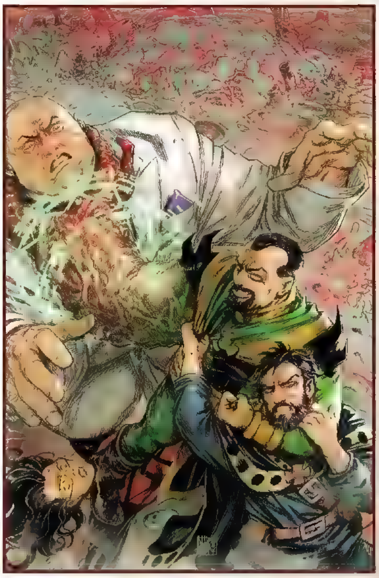
### THE MIGHTY CAPTAIN MARVEL #8



Captain Marvel and her new recruits make one last stand against the Chitauri.

## DARKFORCE NEW YORK

### DOCTOR STRANGE #24



Doctor Strange takes on Mordo, with the fate of New York at stake!

# SECRET EMPIRE

## AUGUST

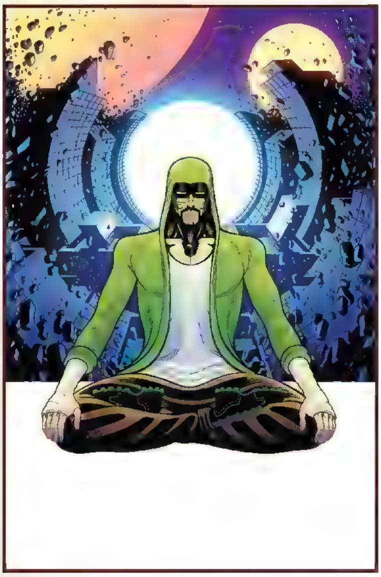
### AVENGERS #10

THE HYDRA AVENGERS ARE A DEADLY FORCE--BUT WHY ARE THEY WORKING TOGETHER?

### U.S.AVENGERS #9

SQUIRREL GIRL AND CO. TAKE THE FIGHT TO HYDRA IN PARIS. VIVE LA RÉVOLUCION!

### SECRET WARRIORS #5



QUAKE'S TEAM FIGHTS FOR THEIR FUTURE--AND THE FATE OF ALL INHUMANS!

### AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #31

IT'S PARKER INDUSTRIES VS. THE SUPERIOR OCTOPUS, AND ONLY ONE CAN WALK AWAY...

# SECRET EMPIRE
## NEXT

SECRET EMPIRE
#9

BUCKY IS BACK! BUT DOES THE WINTER SOLDIER HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO END HYDRA--AND HIS BEST FRIEND--ONCE AND FOR ALL?

### CAPTAIN AMERICA #25

TWO HEROES. ONE MANTLE. NO QUARTER.

### SECRET EMPIRE: BRAVE NEW WORLD #5

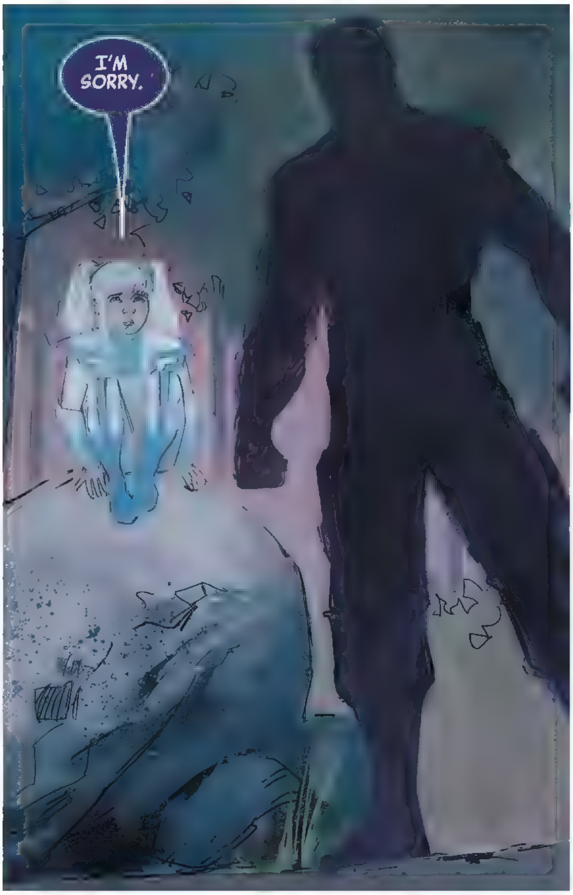
BLADE, DOMINO AND THE INVADERS TAKE ON HYDRA!

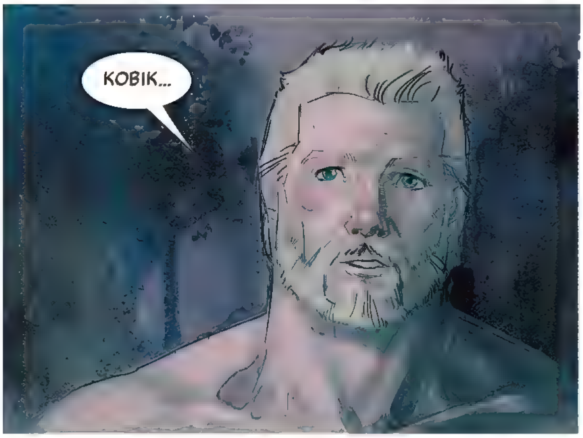
# SECRET EMPIRE

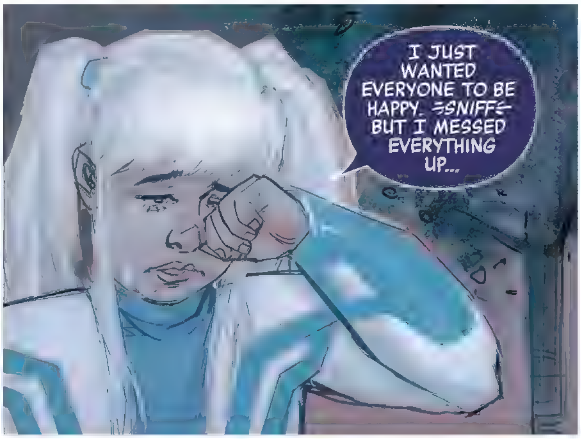
MARVEL
BROOKS

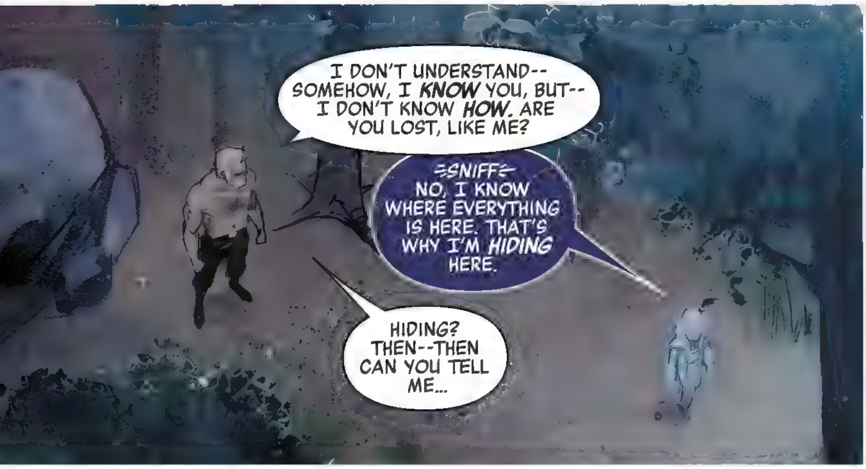
#9

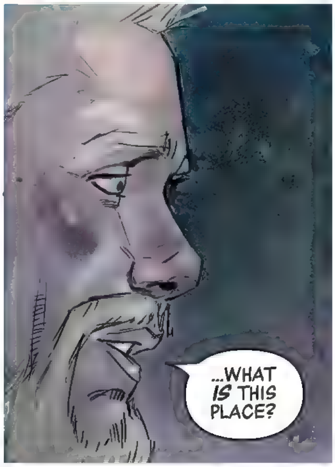
NICK SPENCER, LEINIL FRANCIS YU, ROD REIS, JOE BENNETT

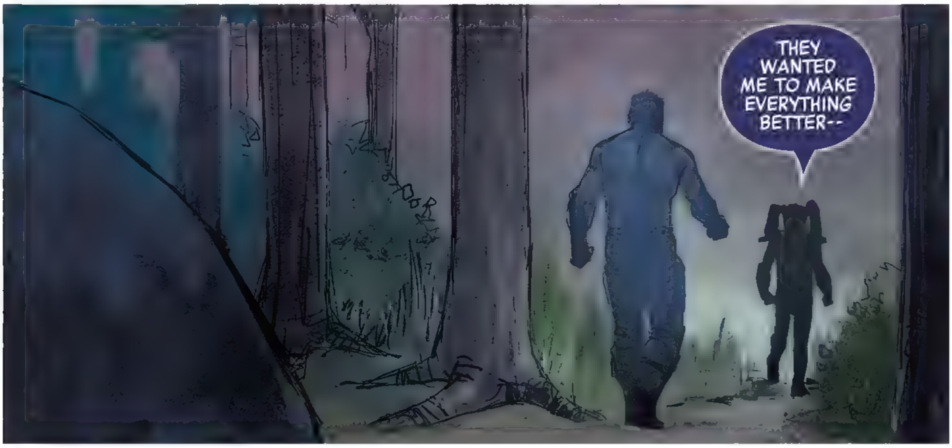

I'M SORRY.

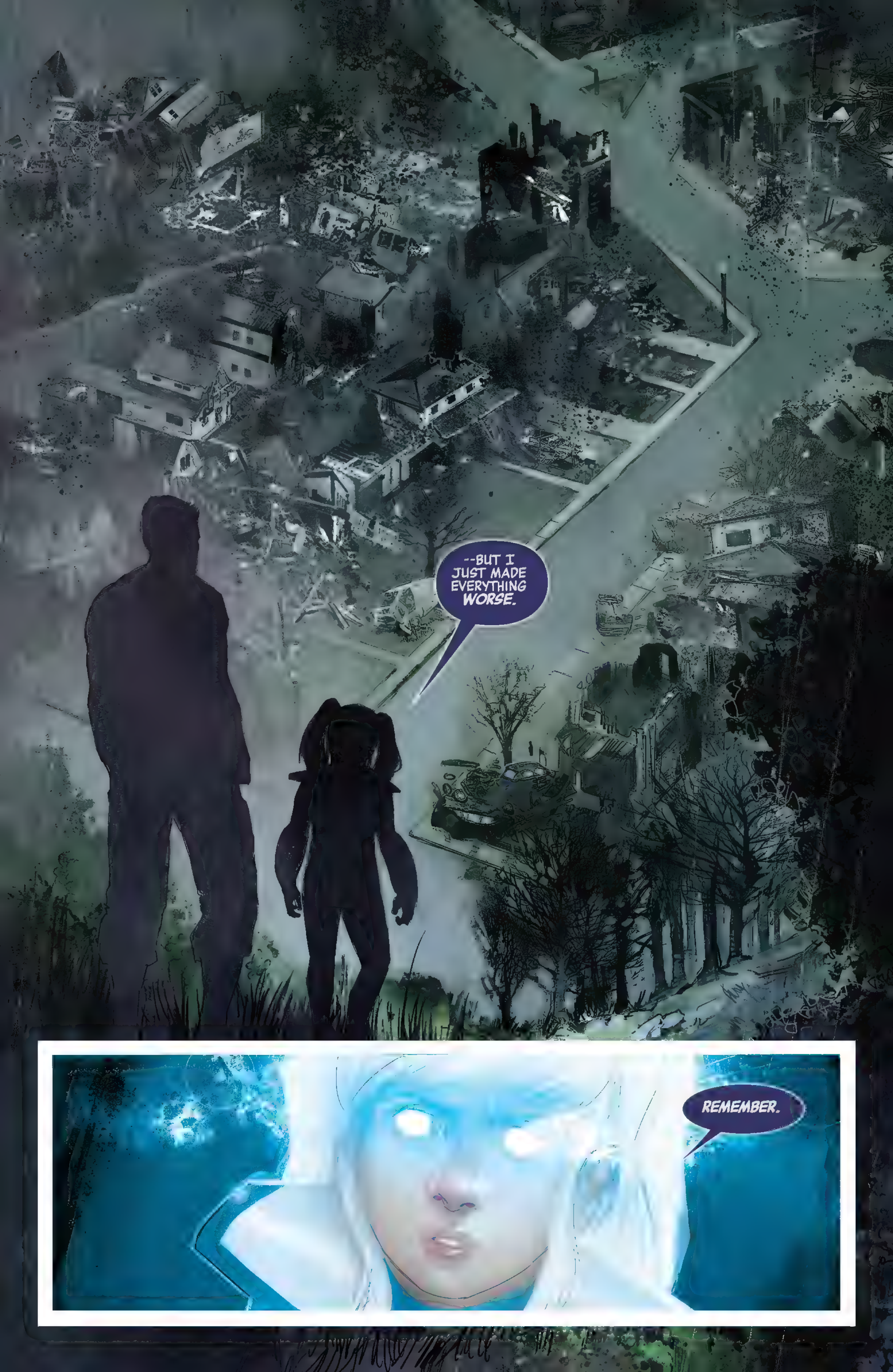

KOBIK...


I JUST WANTED EVERYONE TO BE HAPPY. =SNIFF= BUT I MESSED EVERYTHING UP...


I DON'T UNDERSTAND--SOMEHOW, I *KNOW* YOU, BUT--I DON'T KNOW *HOW*. ARE YOU LOST, LIKE ME?
=SNIFF= NO, I KNOW WHERE EVERYTHING IS HERE. THAT'S WHY I'M *HIDING* HERE.
HIDING? THEN--THEN CAN YOU TELL ME...


...WHAT *IS* THIS PLACE?


THEY WANTED ME TO MAKE EVERYTHING BETTER--


--BUT I JUST MADE EVERYTHING *WORSE.*
*REMEMBER.*

# SECRET EMPIRE

A sentient Cosmic Cube named Kobik turned Steve Rogers, A.K.A. Captain America, into an agent of Hydra--and he used his mantle as the most trusted hero in the world to claim the United States for his new cause.

Using a tiny shard of the same Cosmic Cube, Sam Wilson was able to lead the anti-Hydra resistance through a series of major victories. The Planetary Defense Shield is down, the Darkforce dome around Manhattan is gone, the Inhumans of New Attilan are free and the super heroes of the world are flooding to the Underground's aid.

But even as his enemies close in, Steve Rogers is claiming victories of his own: he captured the Black Panther, taking Wakanda out of the fight, and forced Emma Frost, the ruler of New Tian, to surrender. Now, he has almost enough shards to reassemble the Cosmic Cube and rewrite the world in Hydra's image.

What Captain America doesn't know is that Bucky Barnes secretly survived Zemo's attempt to kill him before the Hydra takeover...and the Winter Soldier has a few thoughts about how to deal with his best friend.

**Writer** ▪ Nick Spencer
**Pencils** ▪ Leinil Francis Yu with Joe Bennett
**Inks** ▪ Gerry Alanguilan with Leinil Francis Yu & Joe Pimentel
**Colors** ▪ Sunny Gho with Dono Sánchez-Almara
**Additional Art** ▪ Rod Reis
**Letterer** ▪ VC's Travis Lanham
**Recap Page Art** ▪ Andrea Sorrentino
**Cover** ▪ Mark Brooks
**Variant Covers** ▪ Dan Mora & Edgar Delgado; Andrea Sorrentino; John Tyler Christopher

**Production Design** ▪ Carlos Lao **Assistant Editor** ▪ Alanna Smith
**Editor** ▪ Tom Brevoort **Editor in Chief** ▪ Axel Alonso
**Chief Creative Officer** ▪ Joe Quesada **President** ▪ Dan Buckley
**Executive Producer** ▪ Alan Fine

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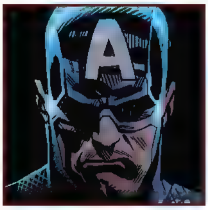
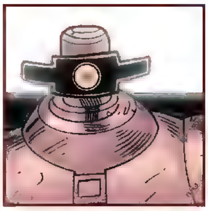
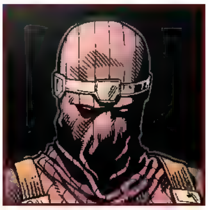
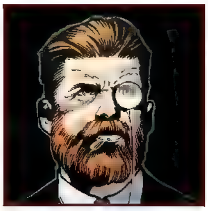
## HYDRA

HYDRA COMMAND

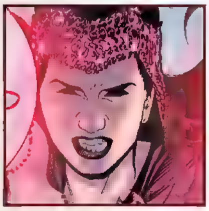

CAPTAIN AMERICA


ARNIM ZOLA


BARON ZEMO


DOCTOR FAUSTUS

AVENGERS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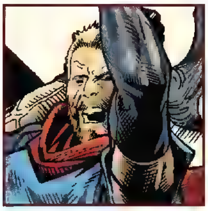
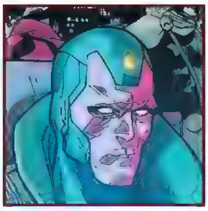
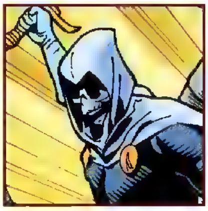
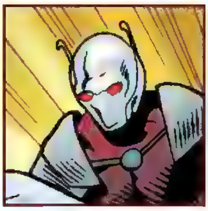
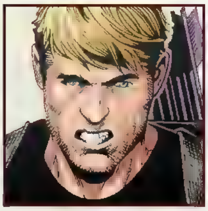

ODINSON

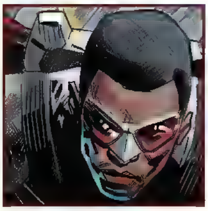

VISION

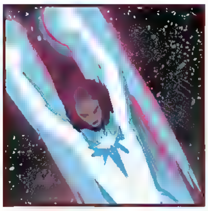

TASKMASTER

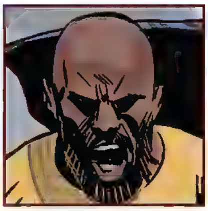

BLACK ANT

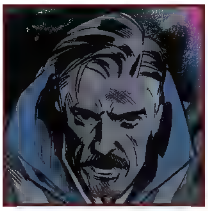
## THE UNDERGROUND

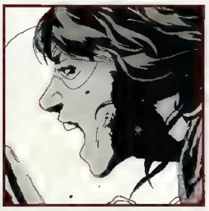

HAWKEYE

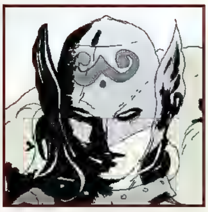

CAPTAIN AMERICA

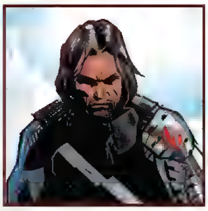

SPECTRUM

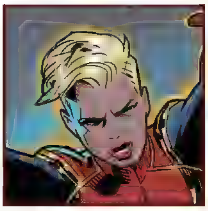

LUKE CAGE


DOCTOR STRANGE

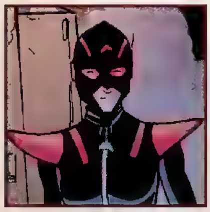

MS. MARVEL

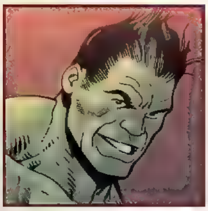

THOR


WINTER SOLDIER


CAPTAIN MARVEL

## CAPTURED


WASP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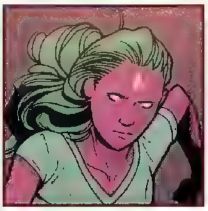
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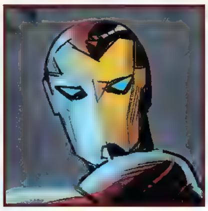
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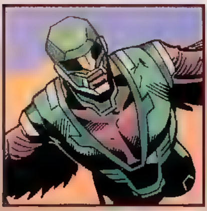
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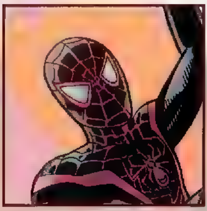
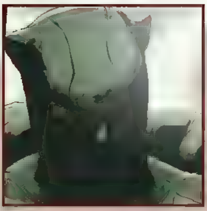
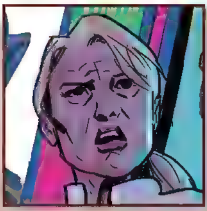
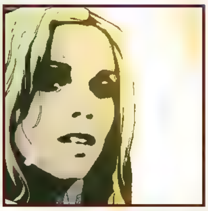
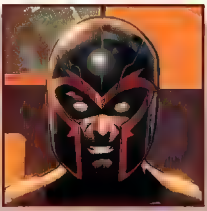

SPIDER-MAN

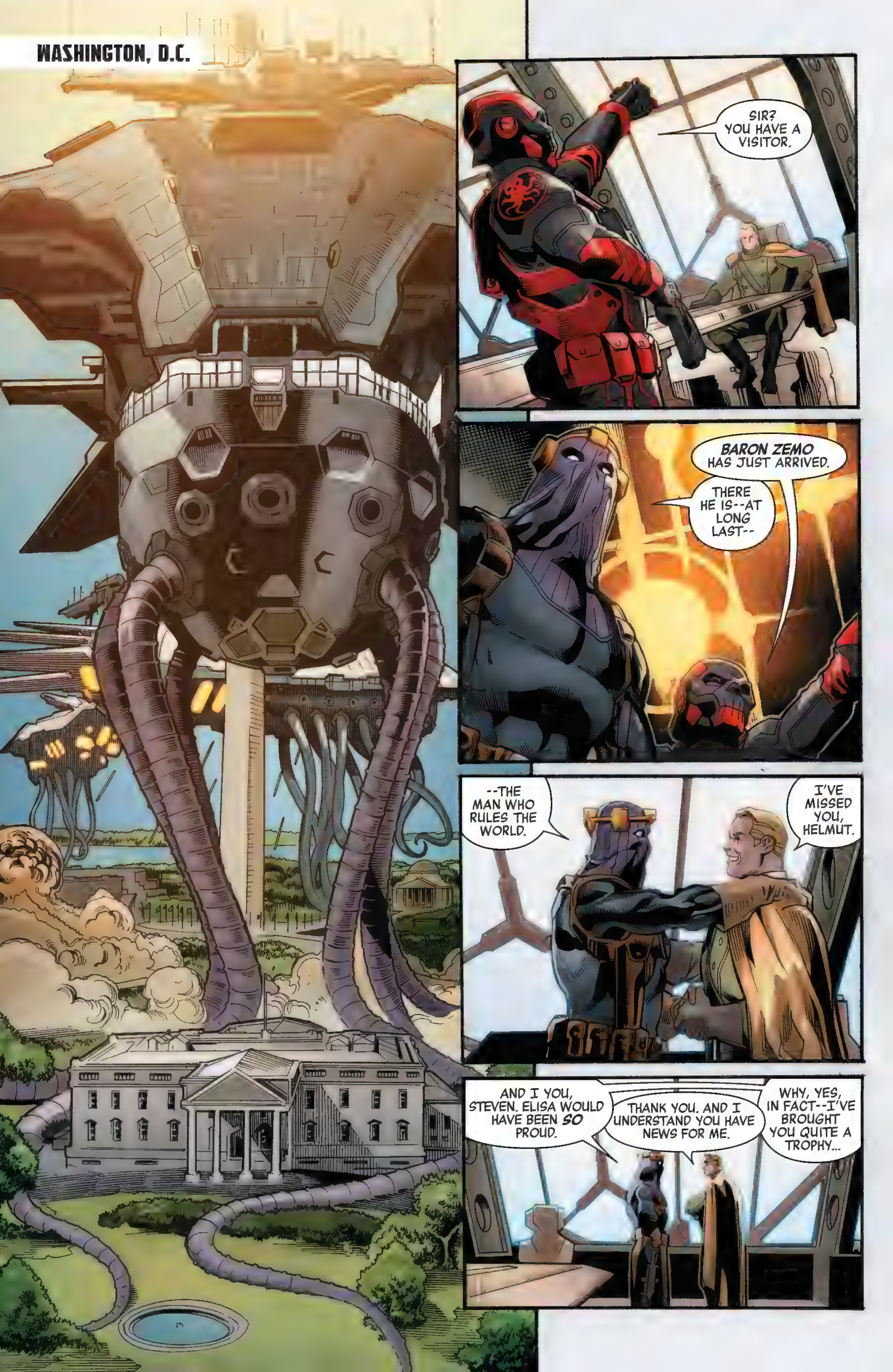

BLACK PANTHER

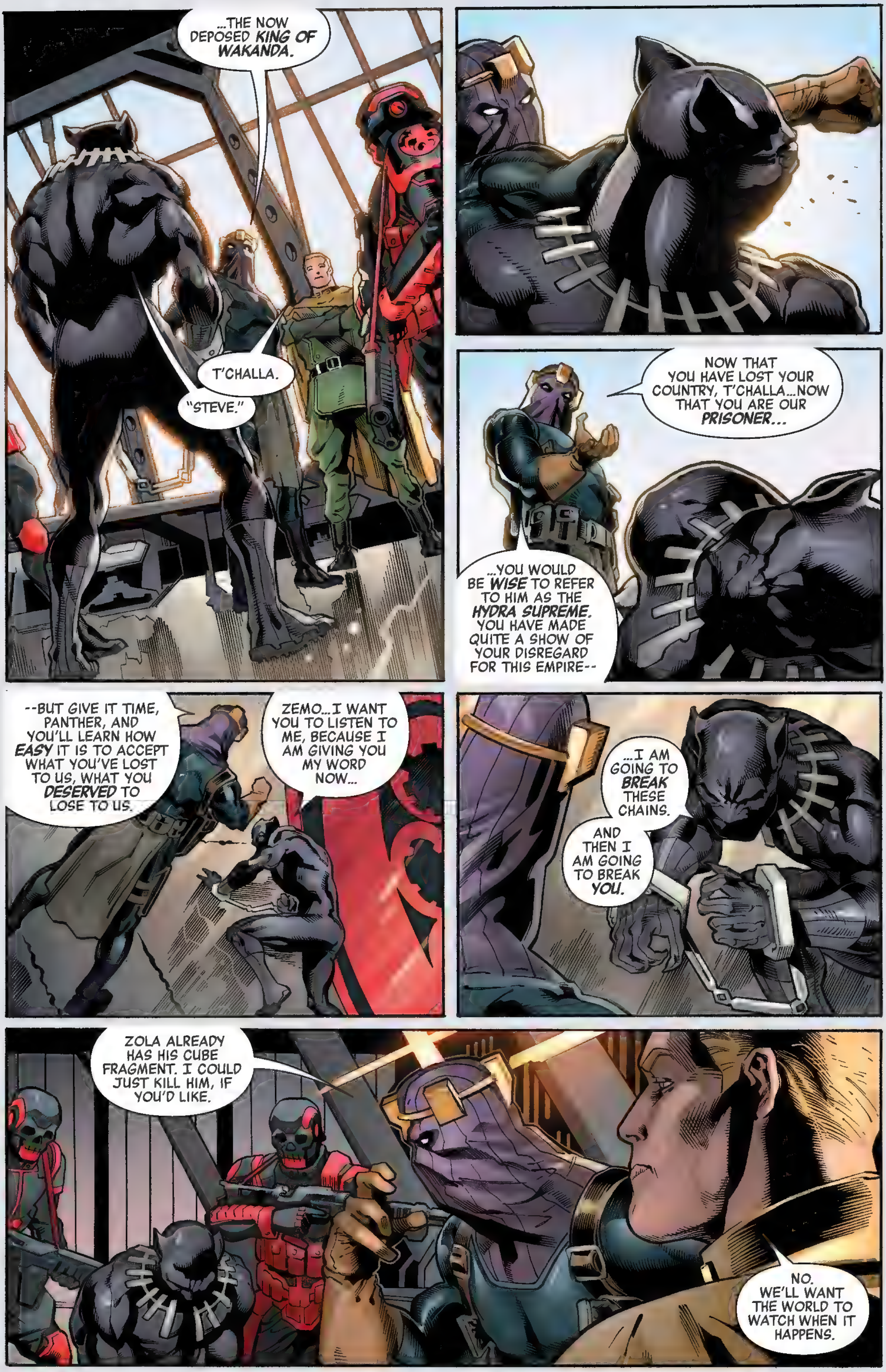

SHARON CARTER

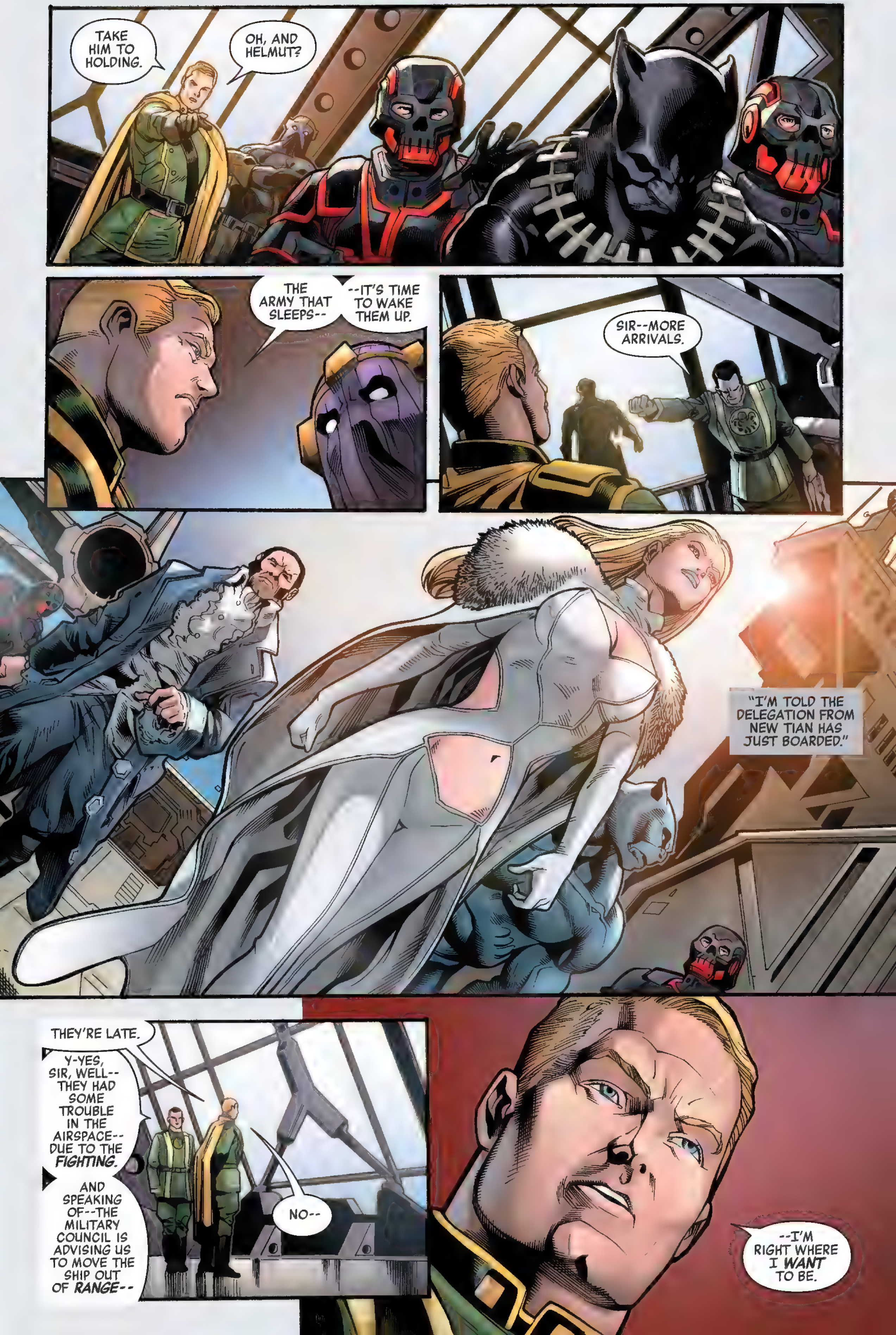
## NEW TIAN

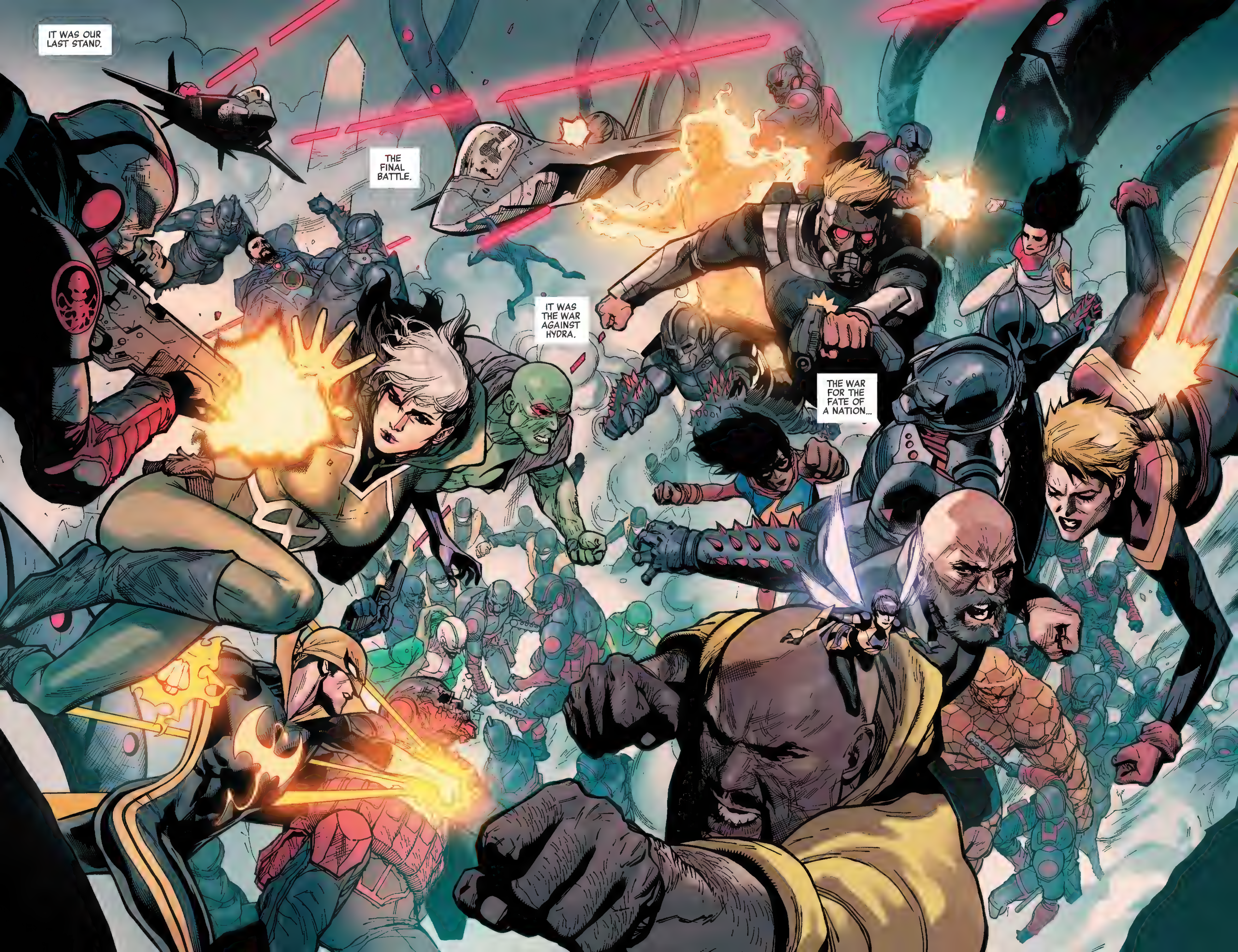

EMMA FROST

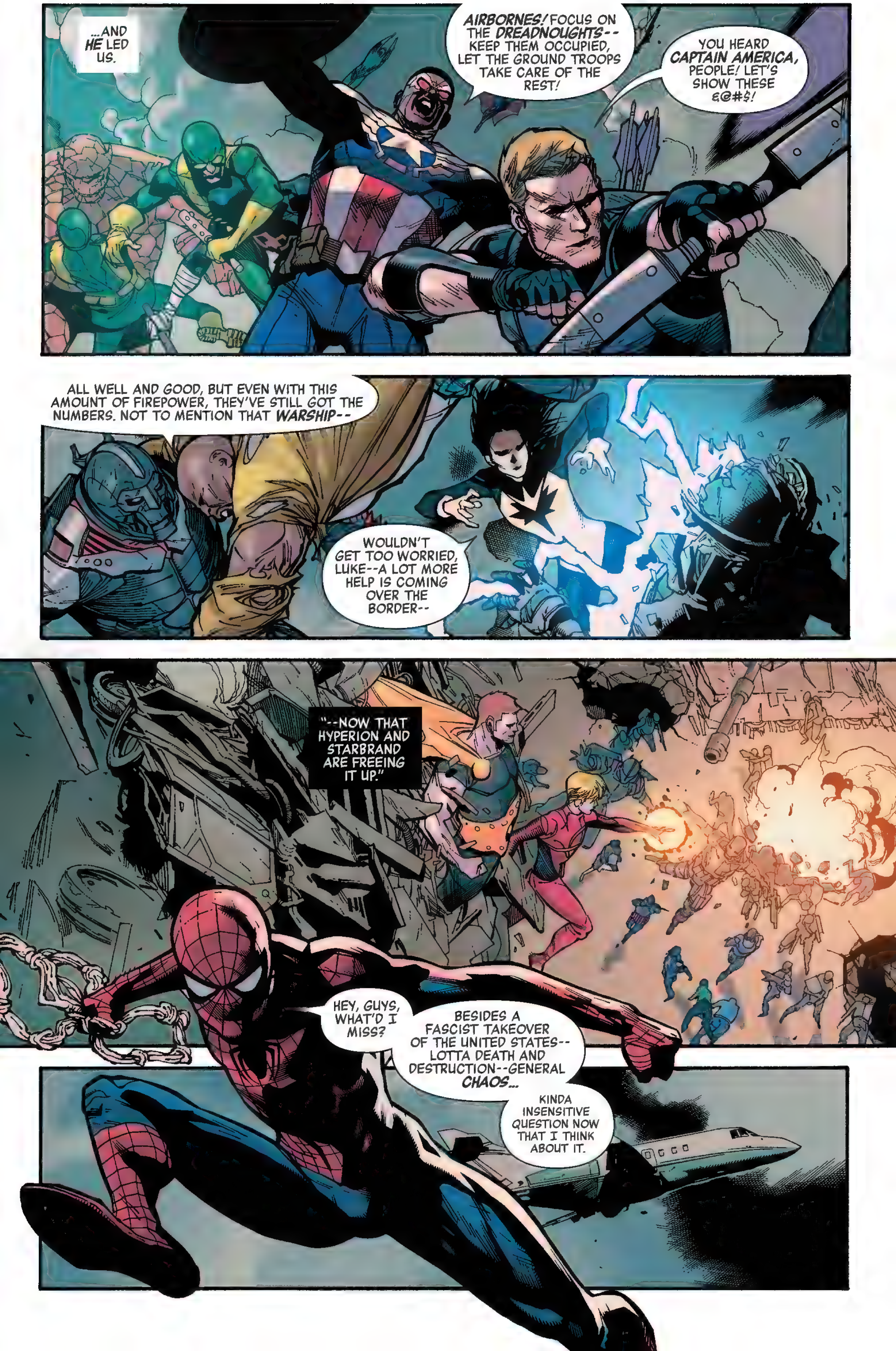

MAGNETO

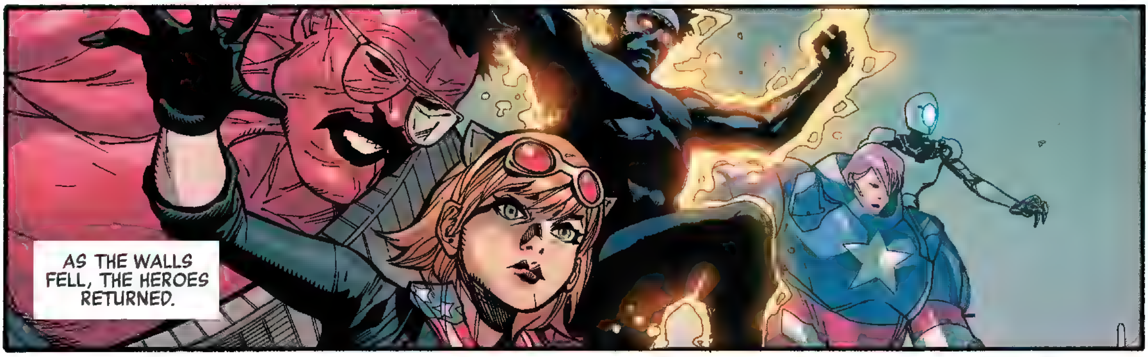

WASHINGTON, D.C.
SIR? YOU HAVE A VISITOR.
BARON ZEMO HAS JUST ARRIVED.
THERE HE IS--AT LONG LAST--
--THE MAN WHO RULES THE WORLD.
I'VE MISSED YOU, HELMUT.
AND I YOU, STEVEN. ELISA WOULD HAVE BEEN SO PROUD.
THANK YOU. AND I UNDERSTAND YOU HAVE NEWS FOR ME.
WHY, YES, IN FACT--I'VE BROUGHT YOU QUITE A TROPHY...

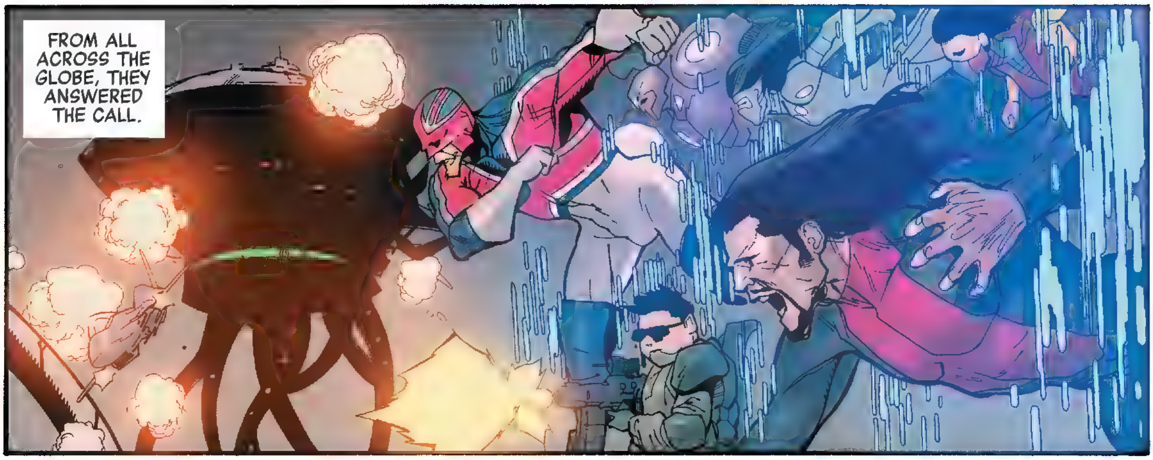

...THE NOW DEPOSED KING OF WAKANDA.
T'CHALLA.
"STEVE."
NOW THAT YOU HAVE LOST YOUR COUNTRY, T'CHALLA...NOW THAT YOU ARE OUR PRISONER...
...YOU WOULD BE WISE TO REFER TO HIM AS THE HYDRA SUPREME. YOU HAVE MADE QUITE A SHOW OF YOUR DISREGARD FOR THIS EMPIRE--
--BUT GIVE IT TIME, PANTHER, AND YOU'LL LEARN HOW EASY IT IS TO ACCEPT WHAT YOU'VE LOST TO US, WHAT YOU DESERVED TO LOSE TO US.
ZEMO...I WANT YOU TO LISTEN TO ME, BECAUSE I AM GIVING YOU MY WORD NOW...
...I AM GOING TO BREAK THESE CHAINS.
AND THEN I AM GOING TO BREAK YOU.
ZOLA ALREADY HAS HIS CUBE FRAGMENT. I COULD JUST KILL HIM, IF YOU'D LIKE.
NO. WE'LL WANT THE WORLD TO WATCH WHEN IT HAPPENS.

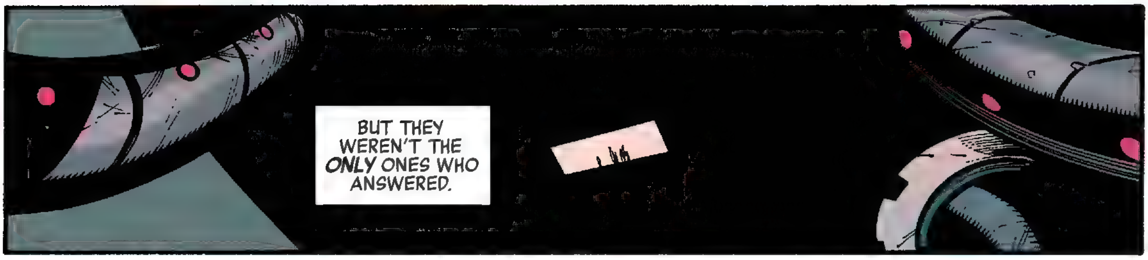

TAKE HIM TO HOLDING.
OH, AND HELMUT?
THE ARMY THAT SLEEPS--
--IT'S TIME TO WAKE THEM UP.
SIR--MORE ARRIVALS.
"I'M TOLD THE DELEGATION FROM NEW TIAN HAS JUST BOARDED."
THEY'RE LATE.
Y-YES, SIR, WELL-- THEY HAD SOME TROUBLE IN THE AIRSPACE-- DUE TO THE *FIGHTING.*
AND SPEAKING OF--THE MILITARY COUNCIL IS ADVISING US TO MOVE THE SHIP OUT OF *RANGE*--
NO--
--I'M RIGHT WHERE I *WANT* TO BE.

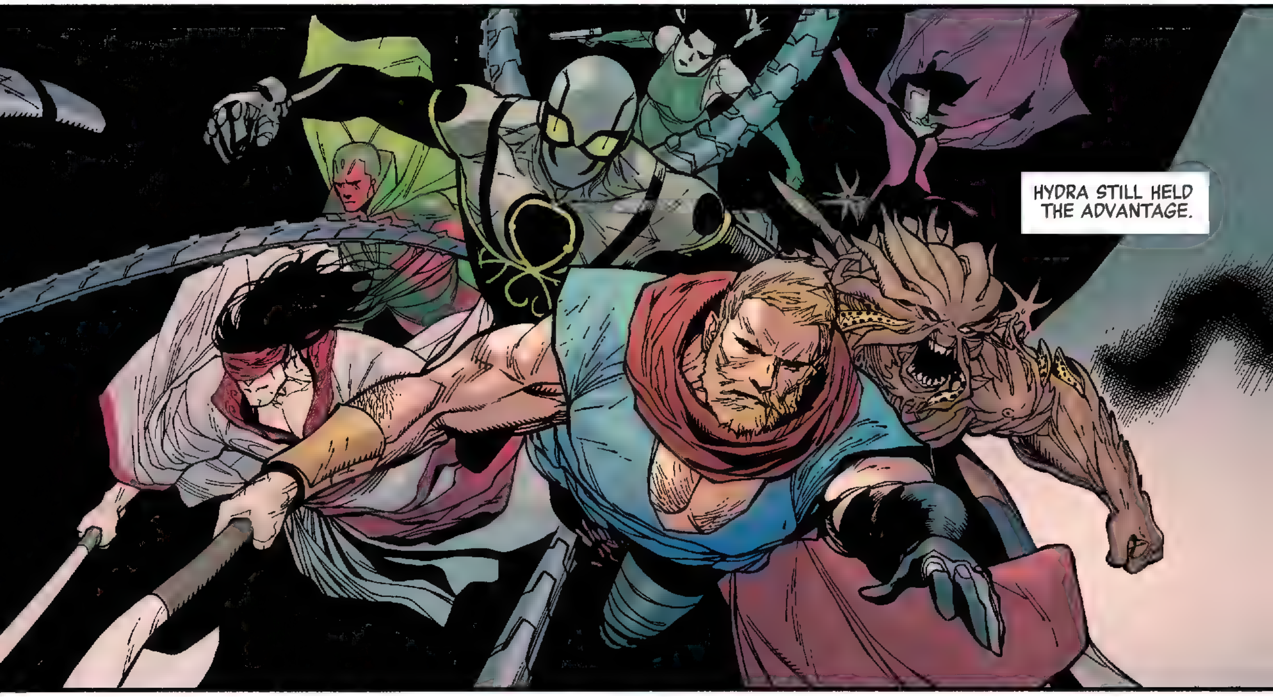

IT WAS OUR LAST STAND.
THE FINAL BATTLE.
IT WAS THE WAR AGAINST HYDRA.
THE WAR FOR THE FATE OF A NATION...

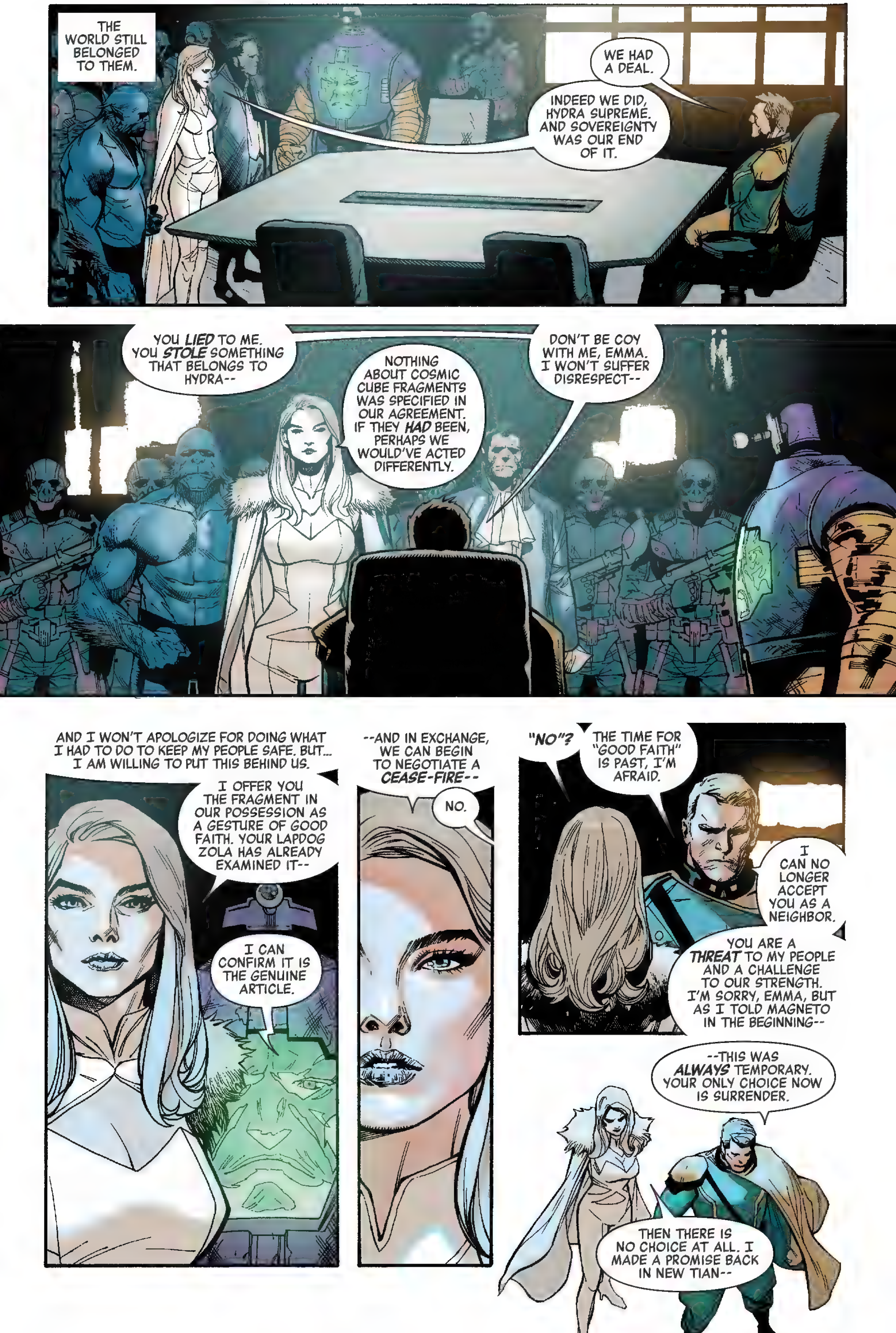

...AND *HE* LED US.
*AIRBORNES!* FOCUS ON THE *DREADNOUGHTS*--KEEP THEM OCCUPIED, LET THE GROUND TROOPS TAKE CARE OF THE REST!
YOU HEARD *CAPTAIN AMERICA*, PEOPLE! LET'S SHOW THESE &@#$!
ALL WELL AND GOOD, BUT EVEN WITH THIS AMOUNT OF FIREPOWER, THEY'VE STILL GOT THE NUMBERS. NOT TO MENTION THAT *WARSHIP*--
WOULDN'T GET TOO WORRIED, LUKE--A LOT MORE HELP IS COMING OVER THE BORDER--
"--NOW THAT HYPERION AND STARBRAND ARE FREEING IT UP."
HEY, GUYS, WHAT'D I MISS?
BESIDES A FASCIST TAKEOVER OF THE UNITED STATES--LOTTA DEATH AND DESTRUCTION--GENERAL *CHAOS*...
KINDA INSENSITIVE QUESTION NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT.

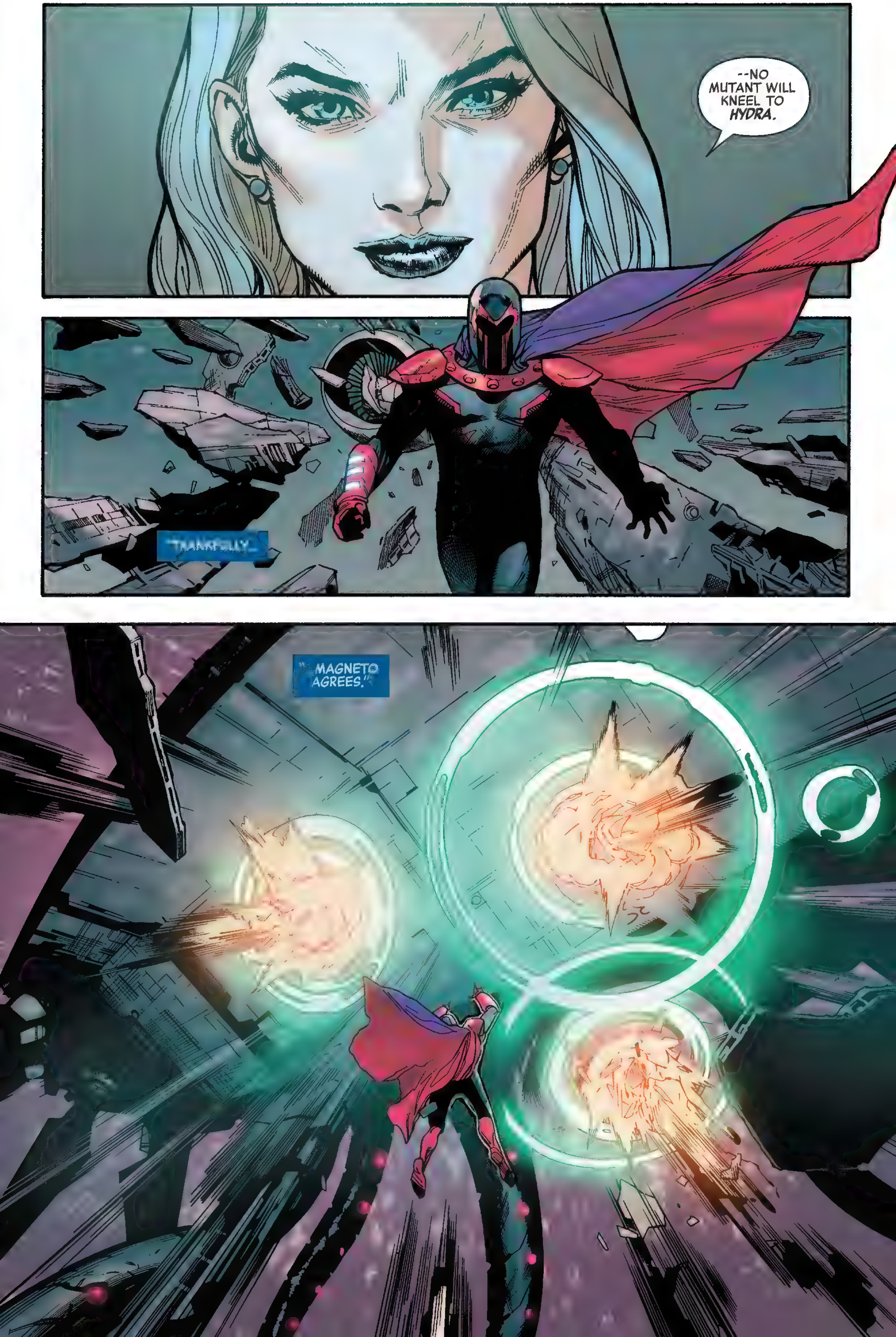

AS THE WALLS FELL, THE HEROES RETURNED.

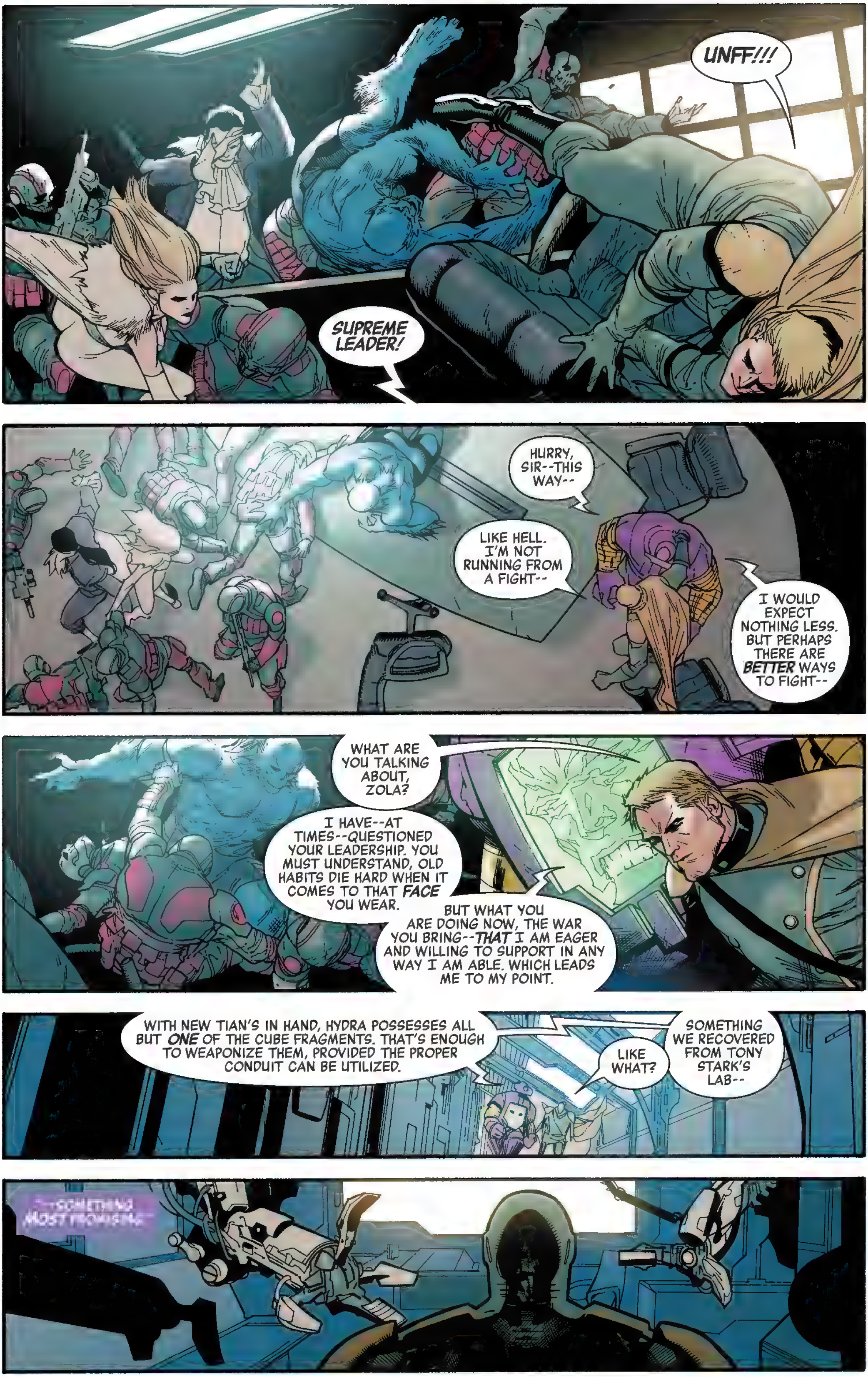

FROM ALL ACROSS THE GLOBE, THEY ANSWERED THE CALL.

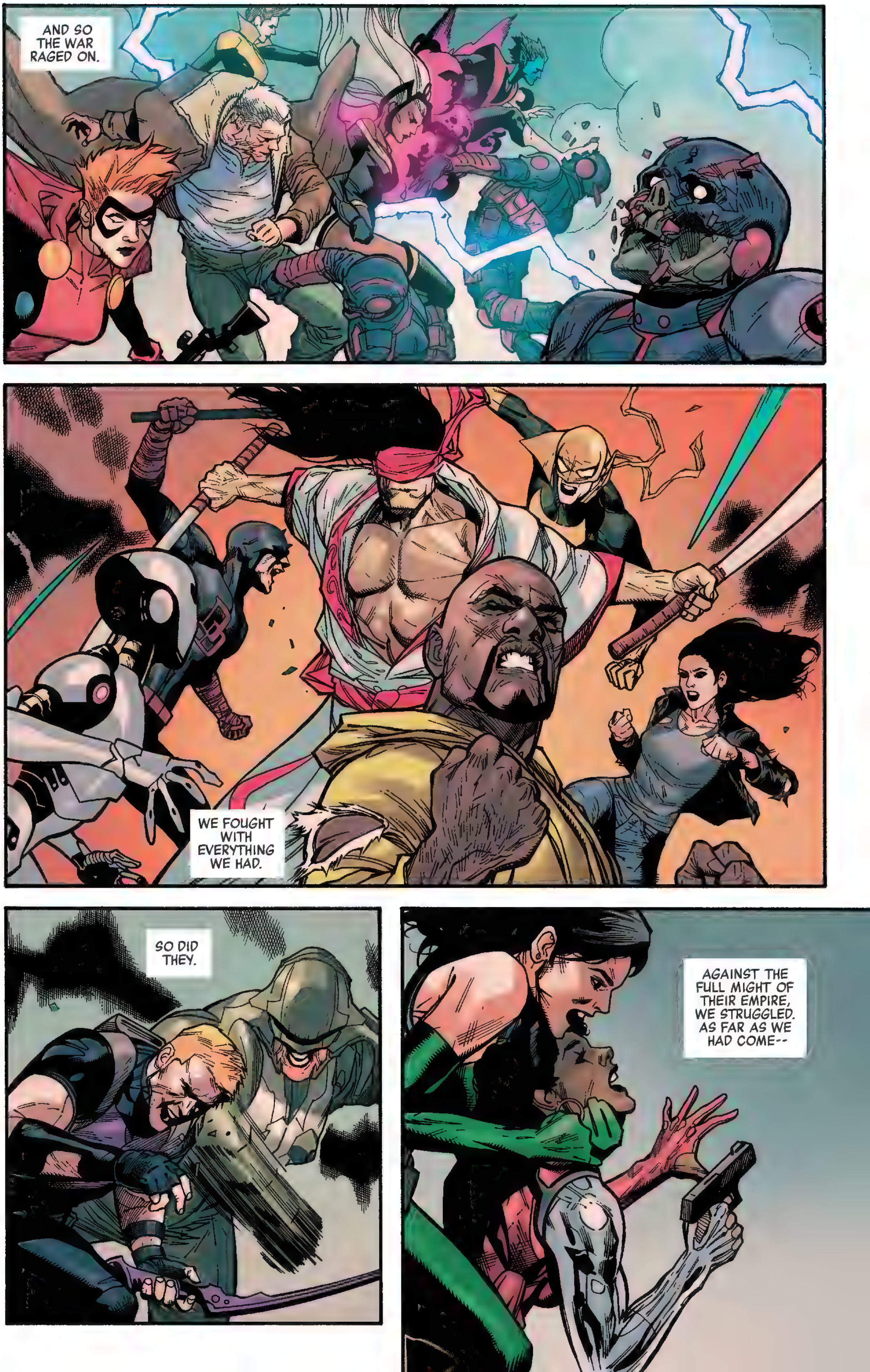

BUT THEY WEREN'T THE *ONLY* ONES WHO ANSWERED.

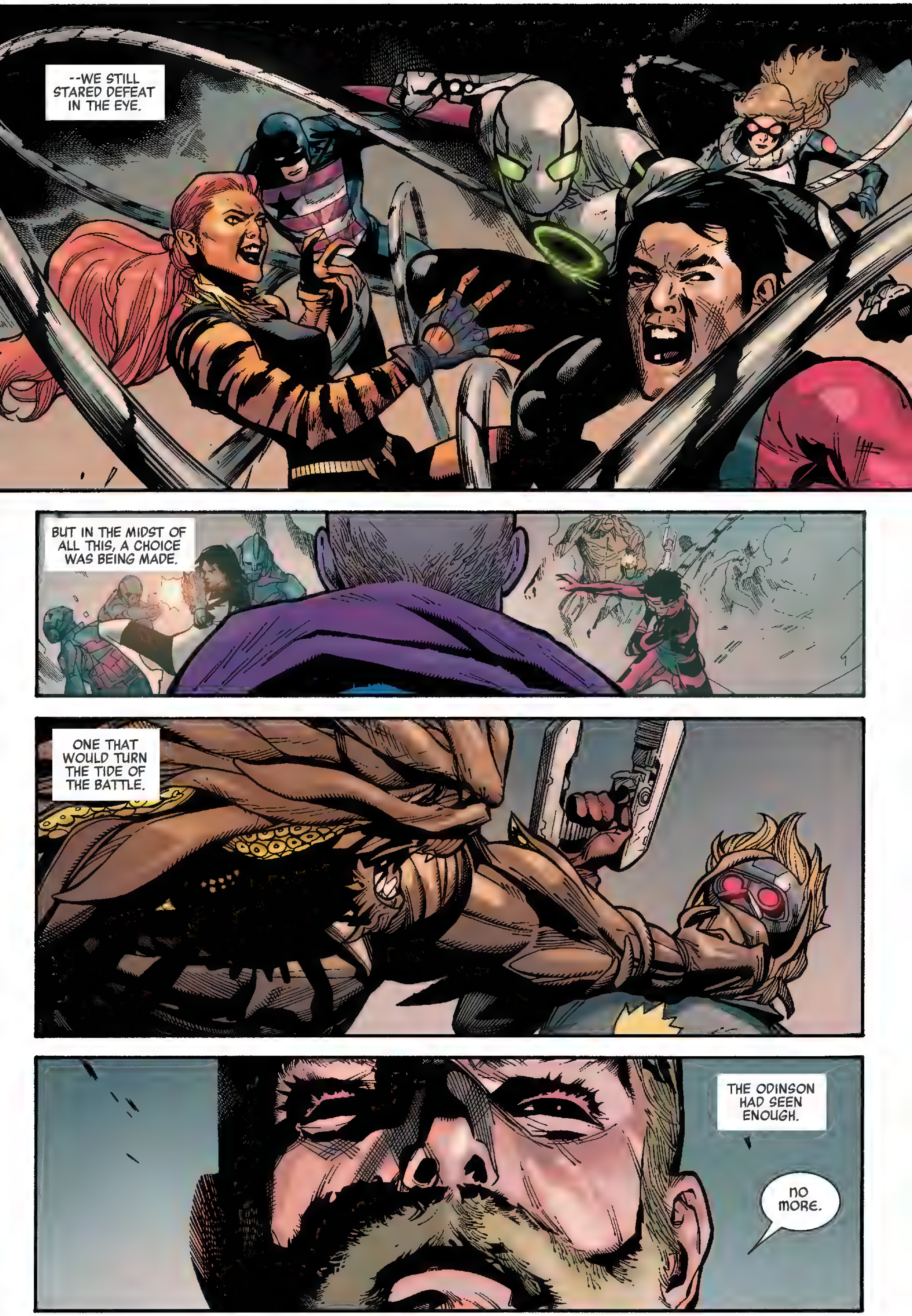

HYDRA STILL HELD THE ADVANTAGE.

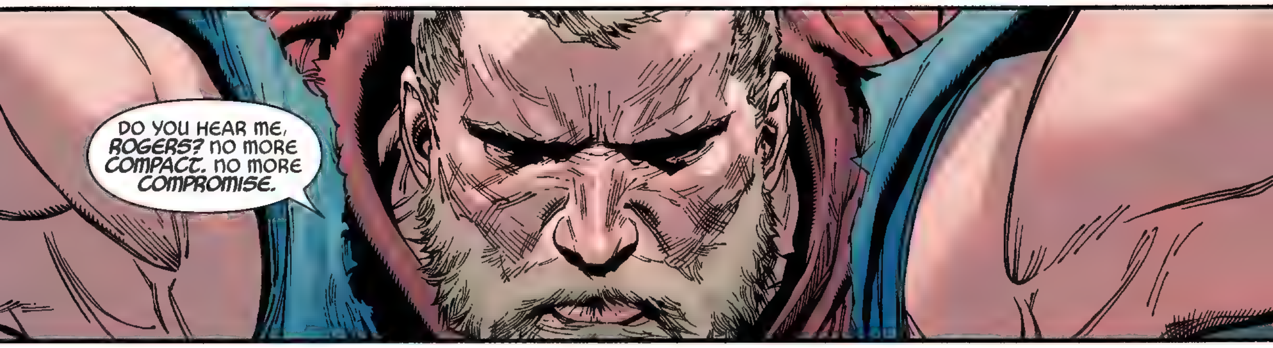

THE WORLD STILL BELONGED TO THEM.
WE HAD A DEAL.
INDEED WE DID, HYDRA SUPREME. AND SOVEREIGNTY WAS OUR END OF IT.
YOU *LIED* TO ME. YOU *STOLE* SOMETHING THAT BELONGS TO HYDRA--
NOTHING ABOUT COSMIC CUBE FRAGMENTS WAS SPECIFIED IN OUR AGREEMENT. IF THEY *HAD* BEEN, PERHAPS WE WOULD'VE ACTED DIFFERENTLY.
DON'T BE COY WITH ME, EMMA. I WON'T SUFFER DISRESPECT--
AND I WON'T APOLOGIZE FOR DOING WHAT I HAD TO DO TO KEEP MY PEOPLE SAFE. BUT... I AM WILLING TO PUT THIS BEHIND US.
I OFFER YOU THE FRAGMENT IN OUR POSSESSION AS A GESTURE OF GOOD FAITH. YOUR LAPDOG ZOLA HAS ALREADY EXAMINED IT--
I CAN CONFIRM IT IS THE GENUINE ARTICLE.
--AND IN EXCHANGE, WE CAN BEGIN TO NEGOTIATE A *CEASE-FIRE--*
NO.
*"NO"?*
THE TIME FOR "GOOD FAITH" IS PAST, I'M AFRAID.
I CAN NO LONGER ACCEPT YOU AS A NEIGHBOR.
YOU ARE A *THREAT* TO MY PEOPLE AND A CHALLENGE TO OUR STRENGTH. I'M SORRY, EMMA, BUT AS I TOLD MAGNETO IN THE BEGINNING--
--THIS WAS *ALWAYS* TEMPORARY. YOUR ONLY CHOICE NOW IS SURRENDER.
THEN THERE IS NO CHOICE AT ALL. I MADE A PROMISE BACK IN NEW TIAN--

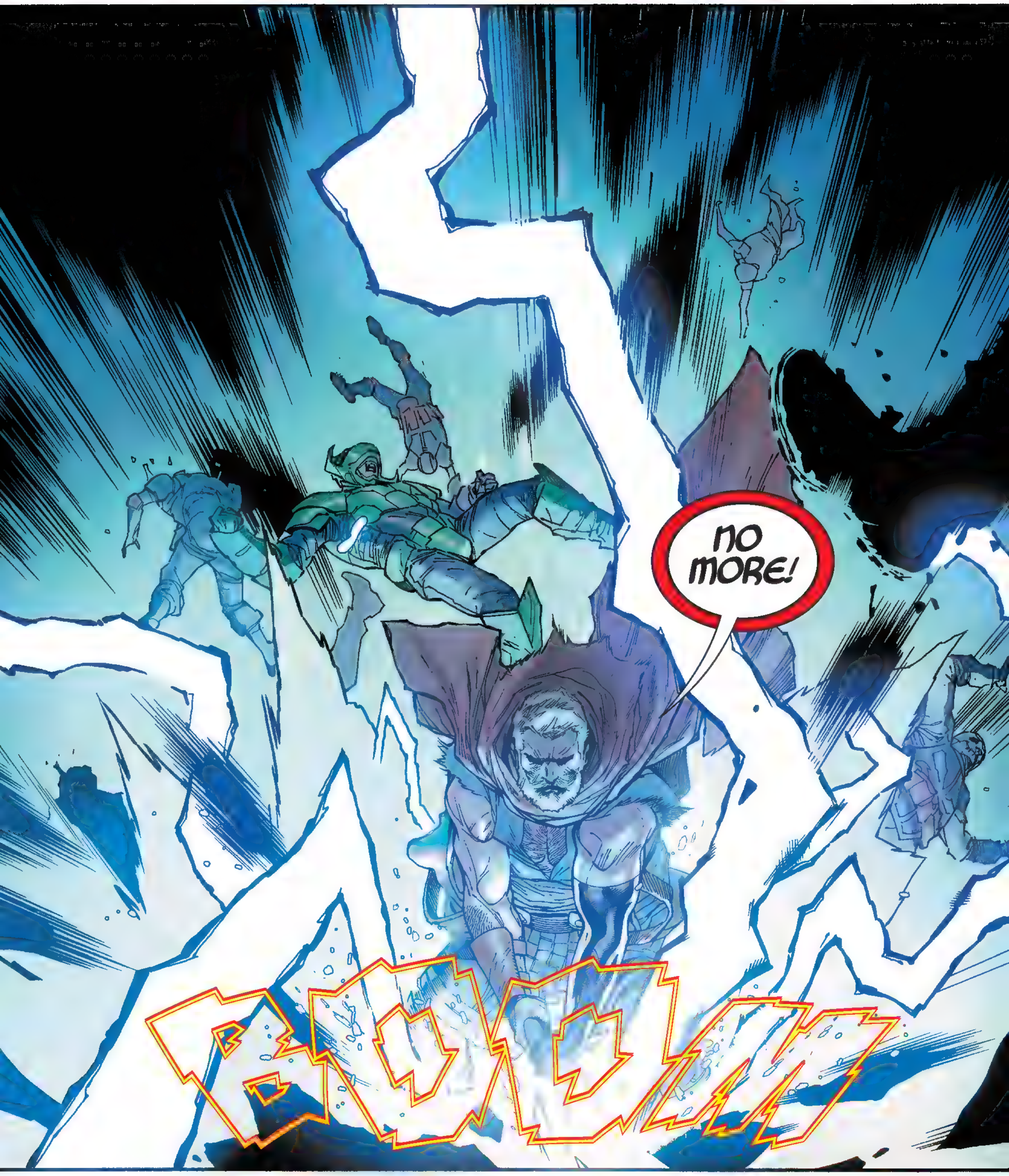

--NO MUTANT WILL KNEEL TO *HYDRA.*
THANKFULLY...
"...MAGNETO AGREES."

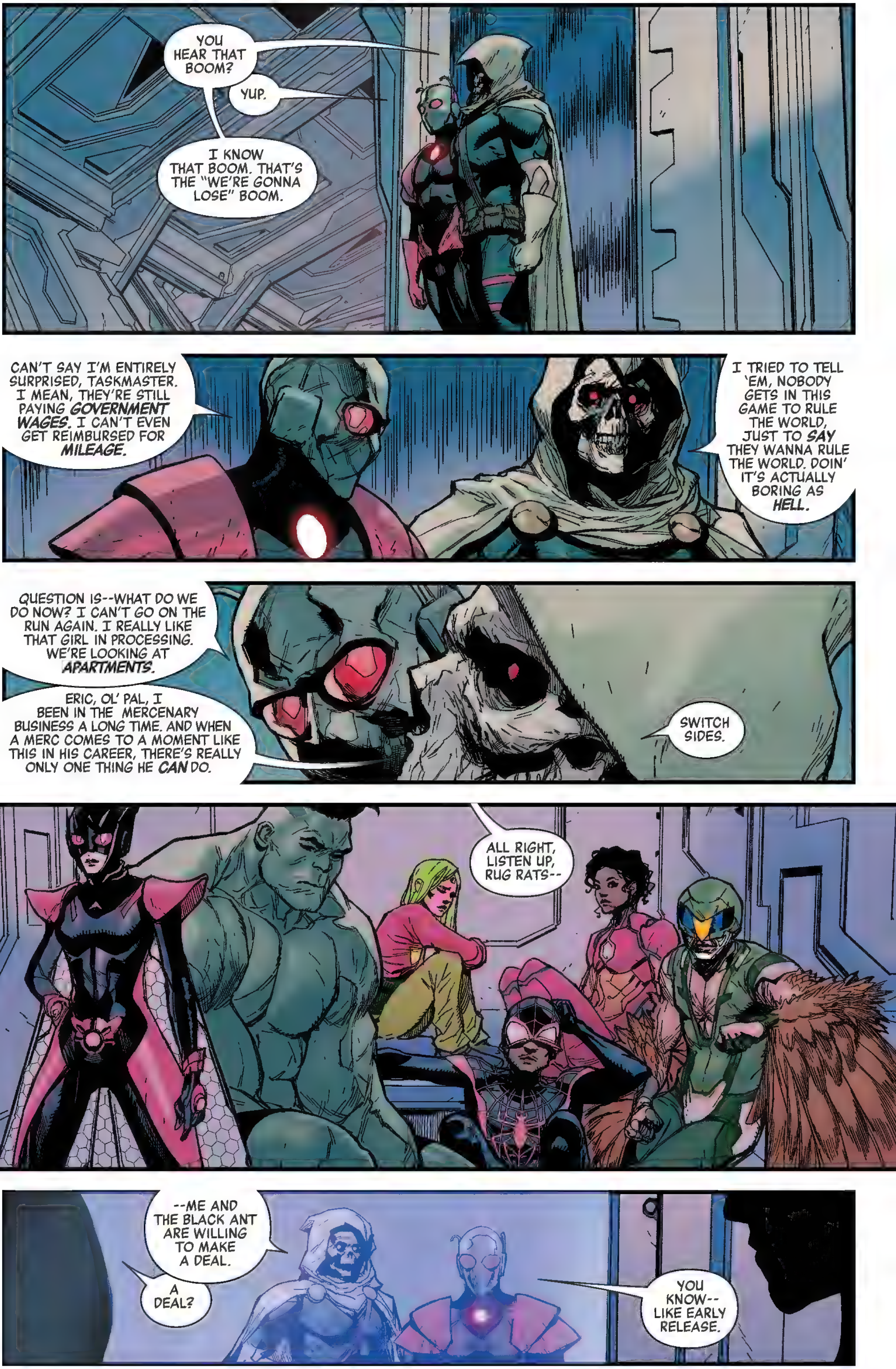

UNFF!!!
SUPREME LEADER!
HURRY, SIR--THIS WAY--
LIKE HELL. I'M NOT RUNNING FROM A FIGHT--
I WOULD EXPECT NOTHING LESS. BUT PERHAPS THERE ARE *BETTER* WAYS TO FIGHT--
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, ZOLA?
I HAVE--AT TIMES--QUESTIONED YOUR LEADERSHIP. YOU MUST UNDERSTAND, OLD HABITS DIE HARD WHEN IT COMES TO THAT *FACE* YOU WEAR.
BUT WHAT YOU ARE DOING NOW, THE WAR YOU BRING--*THAT* I AM EAGER AND WILLING TO SUPPORT IN ANY WAY I AM ABLE. WHICH LEADS ME TO MY POINT.
WITH NEW TIAN'S IN HAND, HYDRA POSSESSES ALL BUT *ONE* OF THE CUBE FRAGMENTS. THAT'S ENOUGH TO WEAPONIZE THEM, PROVIDED THE PROPER CONDUIT CAN BE UTILIZED.
LIKE WHAT?
SOMETHING WE RECOVERED FROM TONY STARK'S LAB--
--SOMETHING MOST PROMISING.

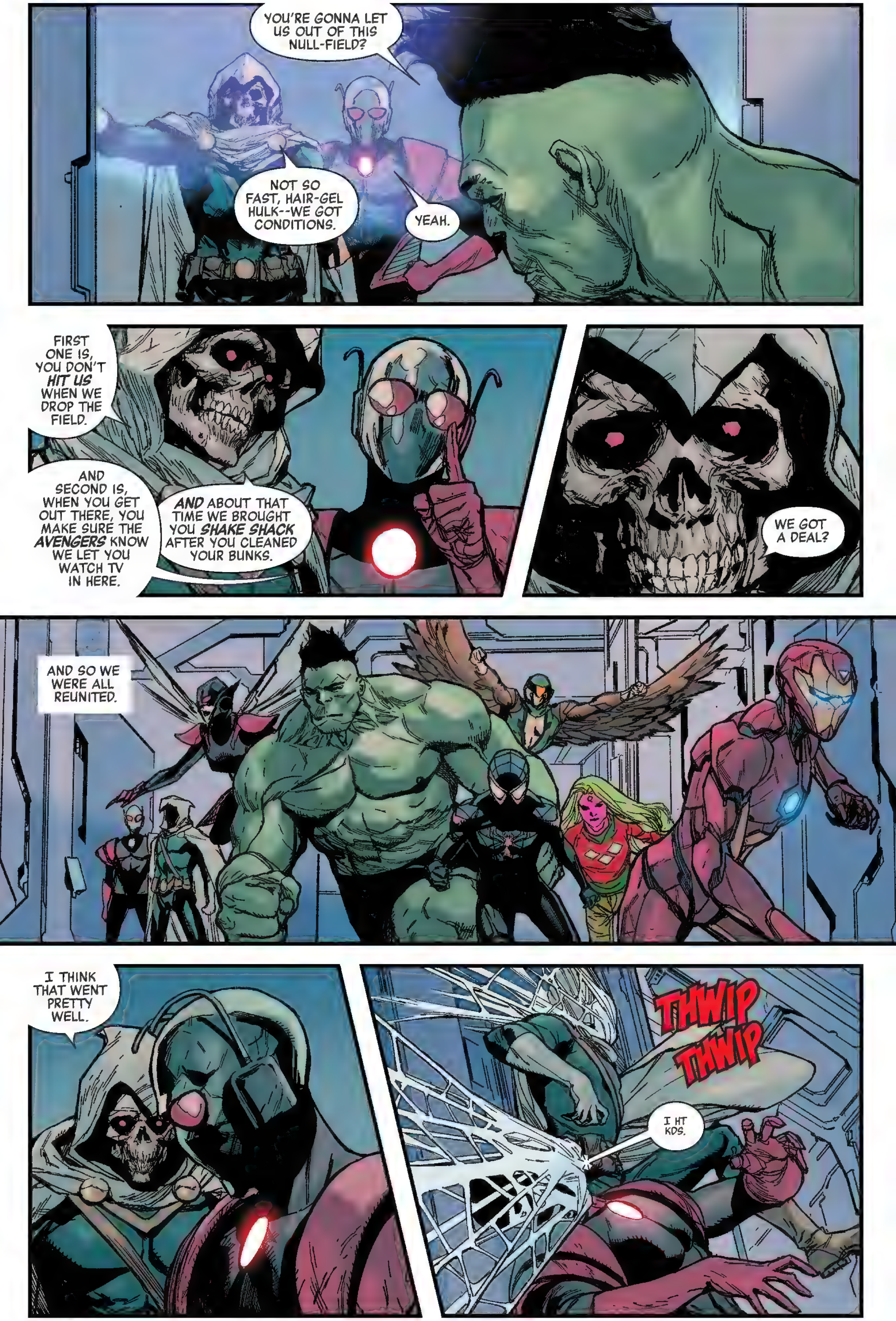

AND SO THE WAR RAGED ON.
WE FOUGHT WITH EVERYTHING WE HAD.
SO DID THEY.
AGAINST THE FULL MIGHT OF THEIR EMPIRE, WE STRUGGLED. AS FAR AS WE HAD COME--

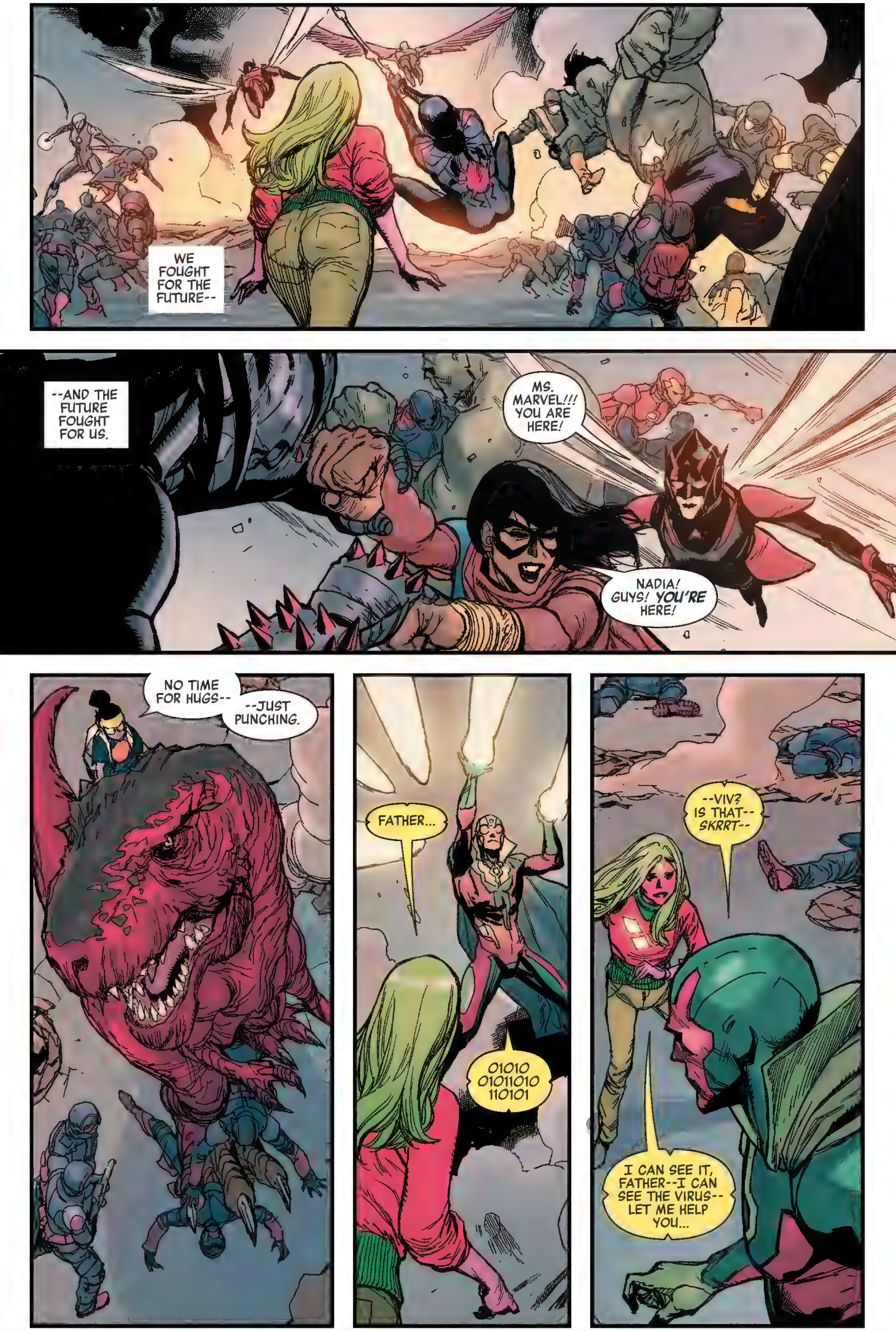

--WE STILL STARED DEFEAT IN THE EYE.
BUT IN THE MIDST OF ALL THIS, A CHOICE WAS BEING MADE.
ONE THAT WOULD TURN THE TIDE OF THE BATTLE.
THE ODINSON HAD SEEN ENOUGH.
no more.

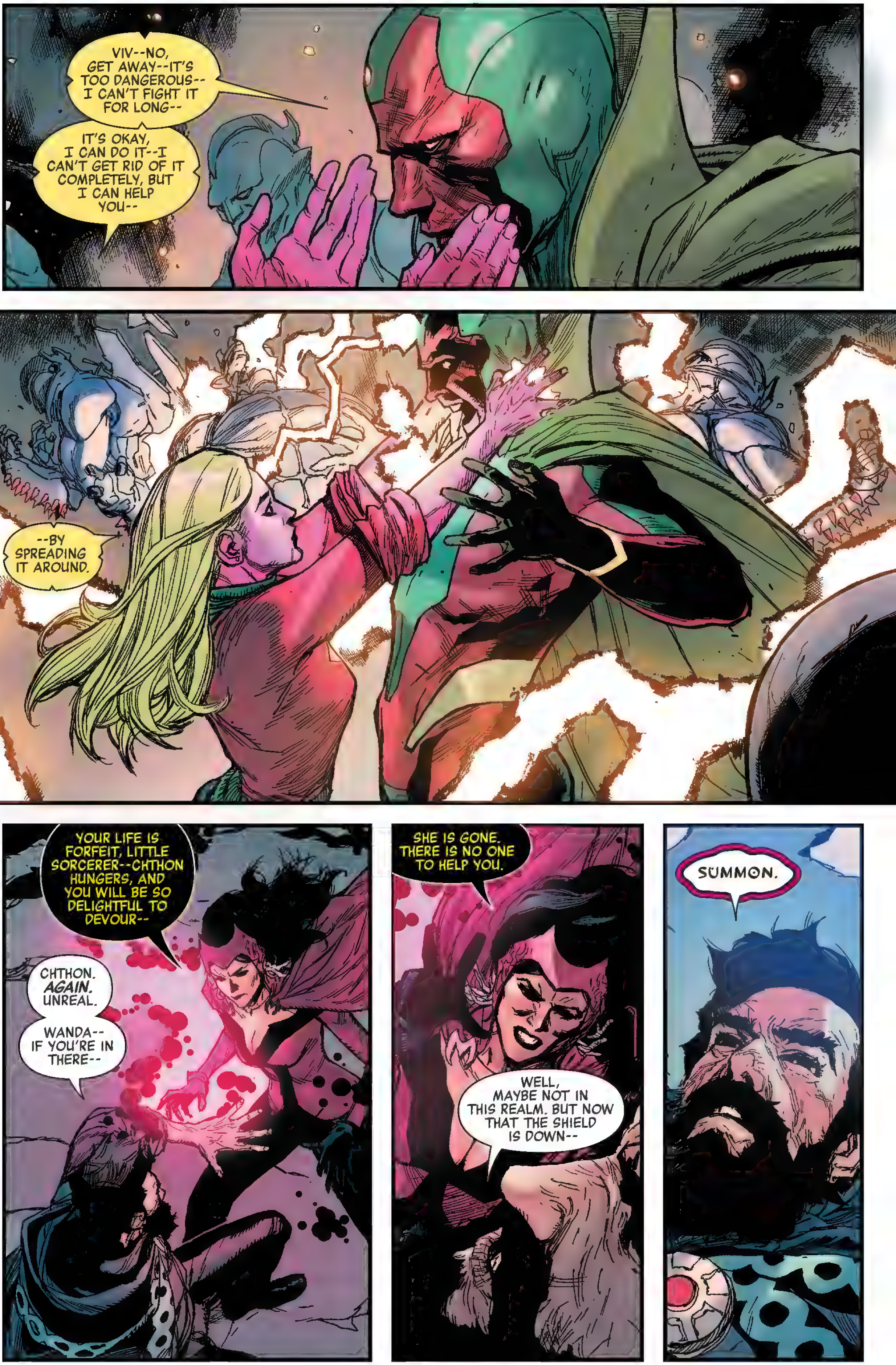

DO YOU HEAR ME, ROGERS? NO MORE COMPACT. NO MORE COMPROMISE.

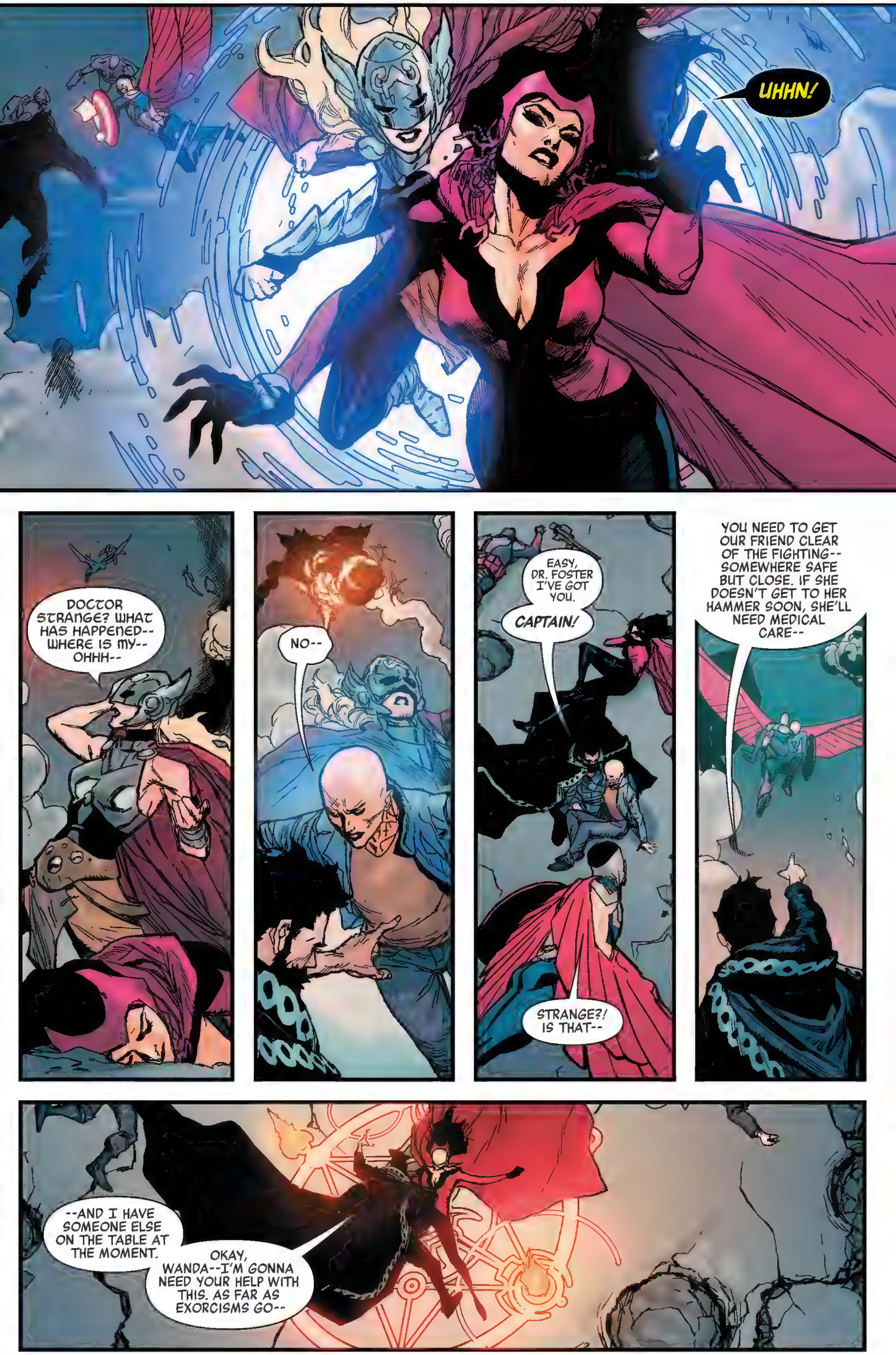

NO MORE!
BOOM

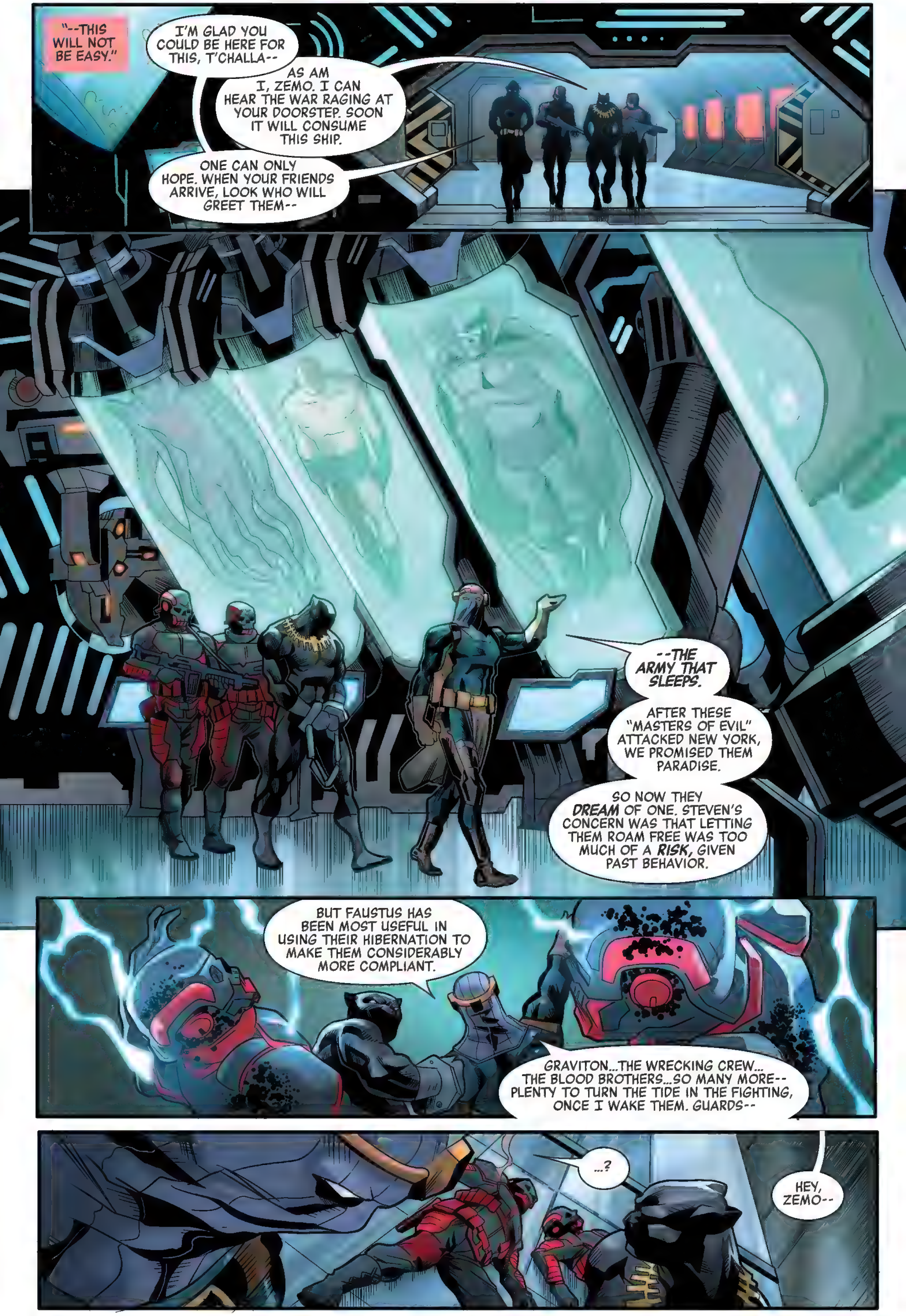

YOU HEAR THAT BOOM?
YUP.
I KNOW THAT BOOM. THAT'S THE "WE'RE GONNA LOSE" BOOM.
CAN'T SAY I'M ENTIRELY SURPRISED, TASKMASTER. I MEAN, THEY'RE STILL PAYING *GOVERNMENT WAGES*. I CAN'T EVEN GET REIMBURSED FOR *MILEAGE*.
I TRIED TO TELL 'EM, NOBODY GETS IN THIS GAME TO RULE THE WORLD, JUST TO *SAY* THEY WANNA RULE THE WORLD. DOIN' IT'S ACTUALLY BORING AS *HELL*.
QUESTION IS--WHAT DO WE DO NOW? I CAN'T GO ON THE RUN AGAIN. I REALLY LIKE THAT GIRL IN PROCESSING. WE'RE LOOKING AT *APARTMENTS*.
ERIC, OL' PAL, I BEEN IN THE MERCENARY BUSINESS A LONG TIME. AND WHEN A MERC COMES TO A MOMENT LIKE THIS IN HIS CAREER, THERE'S REALLY ONLY ONE THING HE *CAN* DO.
SWITCH SIDES.
ALL RIGHT, LISTEN UP, RUG RATS--
--ME AND THE BLACK ANT ARE WILLING TO MAKE A DEAL.
A DEAL?
YOU KNOW-- LIKE EARLY RELEASE.

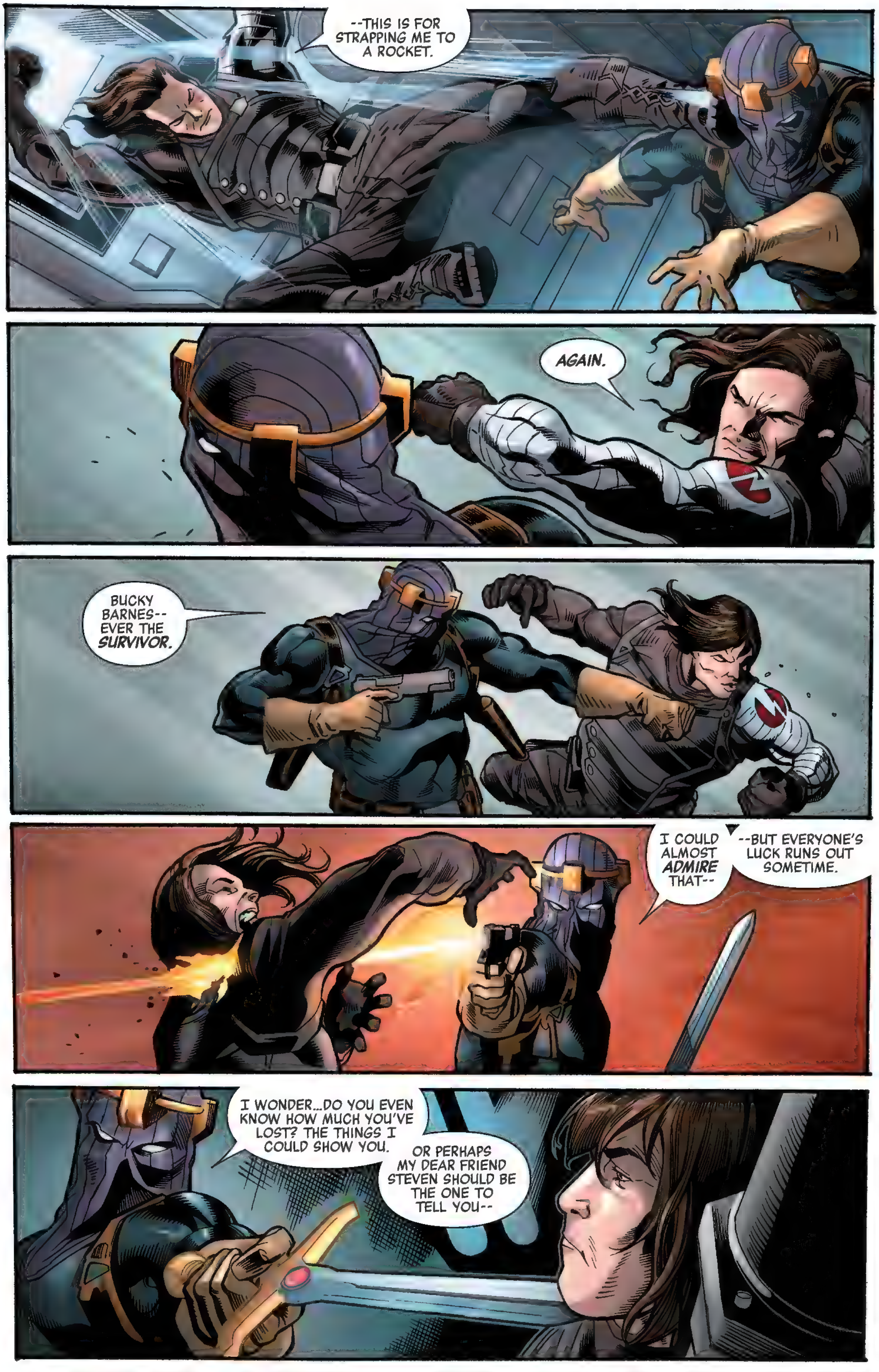

YOU'RE GONNA LET US OUT OF THIS NULL-FIELD?
NOT SO FAST, HAIR-GEL HULK--WE GOT CONDITIONS.
YEAH.
FIRST ONE IS, YOU DON'T *HIT US* WHEN WE DROP THE FIELD.
AND SECOND IS, WHEN YOU GET OUT THERE, YOU MAKE SURE THE *AVENGERS* KNOW WE LET YOU WATCH TV IN HERE.
*AND* ABOUT THAT TIME WE BROUGHT YOU *SHAKE SHACK* AFTER YOU CLEANED YOUR BUNKS.
WE GOT A DEAL?
AND SO WE WERE ALL REUNITED.
I THINK THAT WENT PRETTY WELL.
THWIP THWIP
I HT KDS.

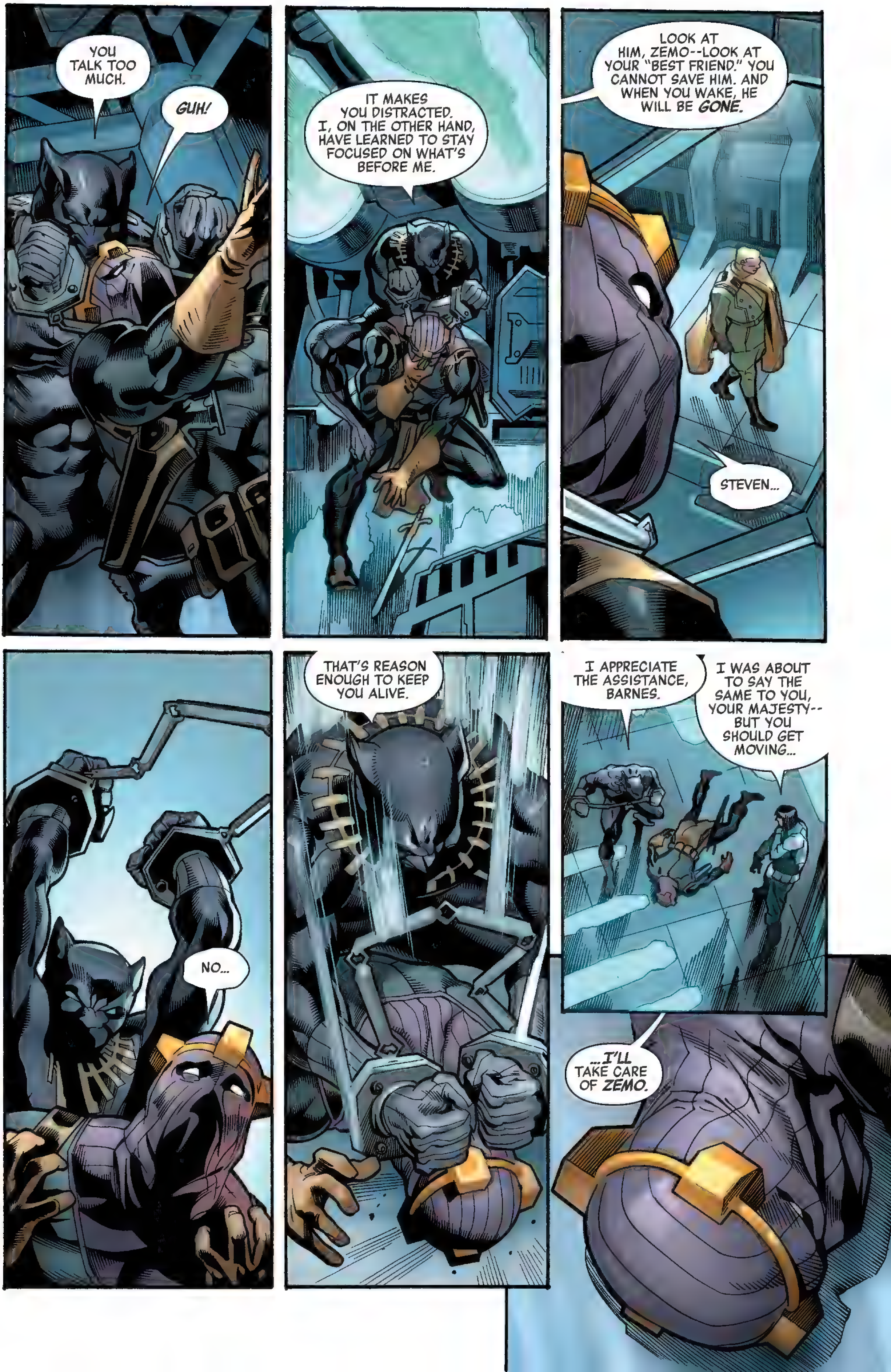

WE FOUGHT FOR THE FUTURE--
--AND THE FUTURE FOUGHT FOR US.
MS. MARVEL!!! YOU ARE HERE!
NADIA! GUYS! YOU'RE HERE!
NO TIME FOR HUGS--
--JUST PUNCHING.
FATHER...
01010 01011010 110101
--VIV? IS THAT-- SKRRT--
I CAN SEE IT, FATHER--I CAN SEE THE VIRUS--LET ME HELP YOU...

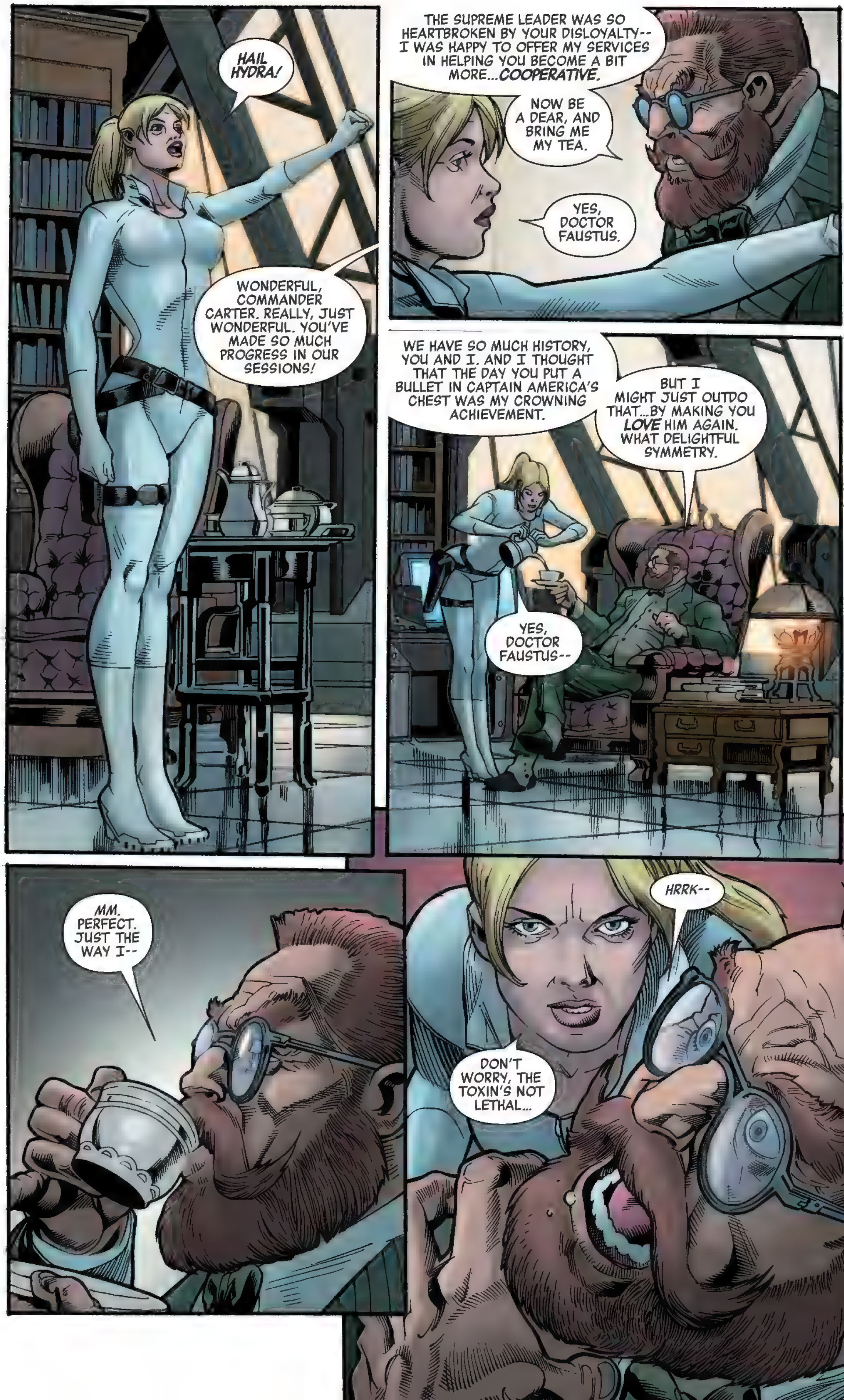

VIV--NO, GET AWAY--IT'S TOO DANGEROUS--I CAN'T FIGHT IT FOR LONG--
IT'S OKAY, I CAN DO IT--I CAN'T GET RID OF IT COMPLETELY, BUT I CAN HELP YOU--
--BY SPREADING IT AROUND.
YOUR LIFE IS FORFEIT, LITTLE SORCERER--CHTHON HUNGERS, AND YOU WILL BE SO DELIGHTFUL TO DEVOUR--
CHTHON. AGAIN. UNREAL.
WANDA--IF YOU'RE IN THERE--
SHE IS GONE. THERE IS NO ONE TO HELP YOU.
WELL, MAYBE NOT IN THIS REALM. BUT NOW THAT THE SHIELD IS DOWN--
SUMMON.

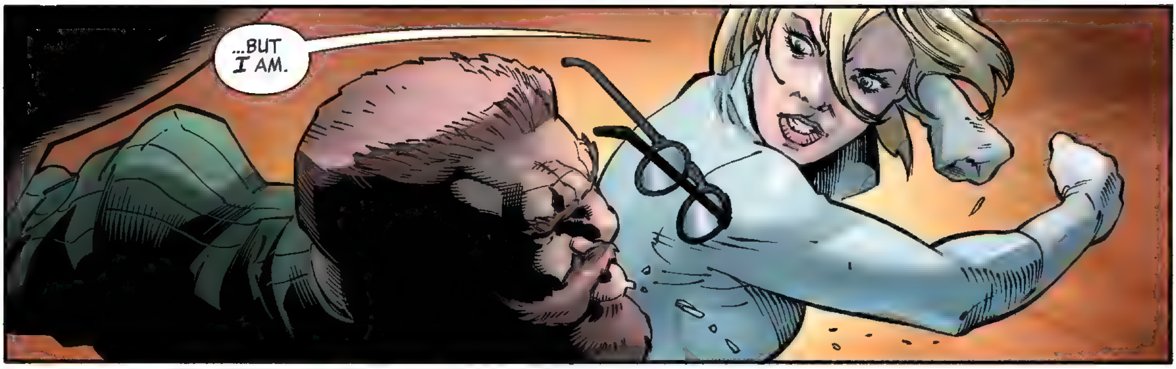

UHHN!
DOCTOR STRANGE? WHAT HAS HAPPENED-- WHERE IS MY-- OHHH--
NO--
EASY, DR. FOSTER I'VE GOT YOU.
CAPTAIN!
STRANGE?! IS THAT--
YOU NEED TO GET OUR FRIEND CLEAR OF THE FIGHTING-- SOMEWHERE SAFE BUT CLOSE. IF SHE DOESN'T GET TO HER HAMMER SOON, SHE'LL NEED MEDICAL CARE--
--AND I HAVE SOMEONE ELSE ON THE TABLE AT THE MOMENT.
OKAY, WANDA--I'M GONNA NEED YOUR HELP WITH THIS. AS FAR AS EXORCISMS GO--

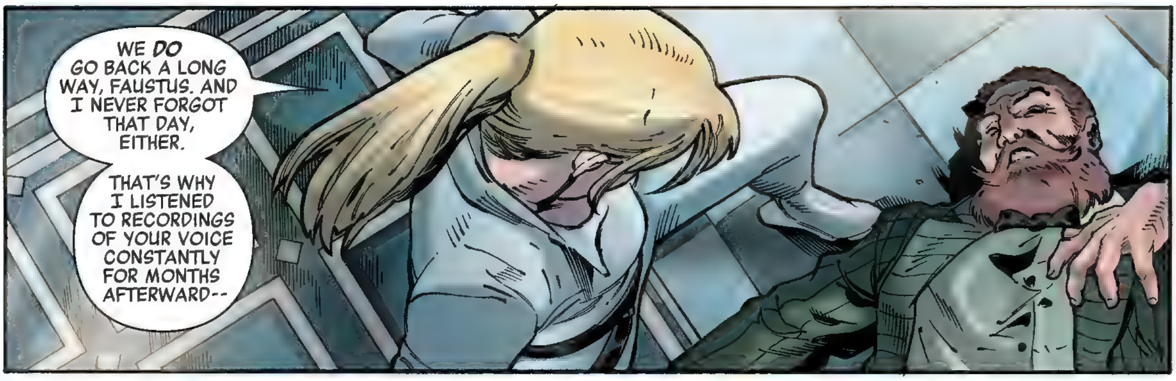

"--THIS WILL NOT BE EASY."
I'M GLAD YOU COULD BE HERE FOR THIS, T'CHALLA--
AS AM I, ZEMO. I CAN HEAR THE WAR RAGING AT YOUR DOORSTEP. SOON IT WILL CONSUME THIS SHIP.
ONE CAN ONLY HOPE. WHEN YOUR FRIENDS ARRIVE, LOOK WHO WILL GREET THEM--
--*THE ARMY THAT SLEEPS.*
AFTER THESE "MASTERS OF EVIL" ATTACKED NEW YORK, WE PROMISED THEM PARADISE.
SO NOW THEY ***DREAM*** OF ONE. STEVEN'S CONCERN WAS THAT LETTING THEM ROAM FREE WAS TOO MUCH OF A ***RISK,*** GIVEN PAST BEHAVIOR.
BUT FAUSTUS HAS BEEN MOST USEFUL IN USING THEIR HIBERNATION TO MAKE THEM CONSIDERABLY MORE COMPLIANT.
GRAVITON...THE WRECKING CREW... THE BLOOD BROTHERS...SO MANY MORE-- PLENTY TO TURN THE TIDE IN THE FIGHTING, ONCE I WAKE THEM. GUARDS--
...?
HEY, ZEMO--

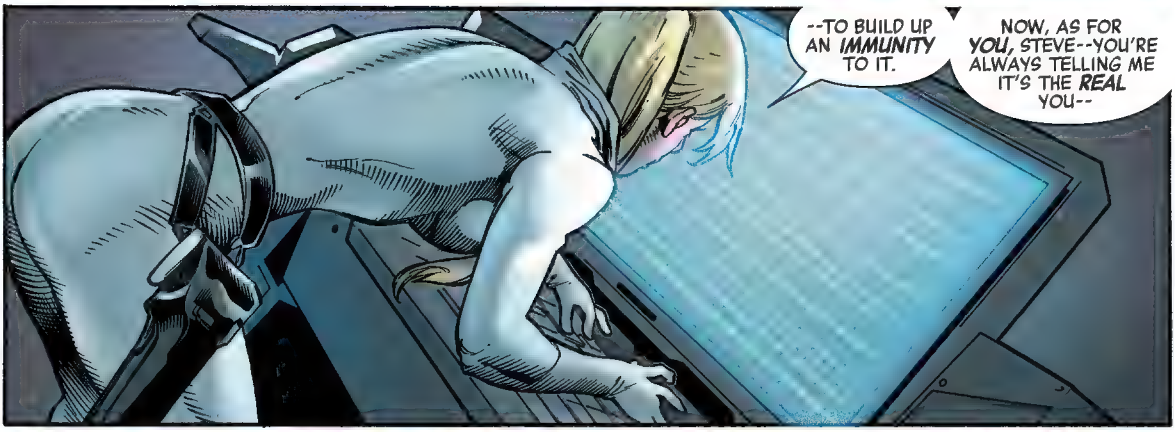

--THIS IS FOR STRAPPING ME TO A ROCKET.
AGAIN.
BUCKY BARNES--EVER THE *SURVIVOR.*
I COULD ALMOST *ADMIRE* THAT--
--BUT EVERYONE'S LUCK RUNS OUT SOMETIME.
I WONDER...DO YOU EVEN KNOW HOW MUCH YOU'VE LOST? THE THINGS I COULD SHOW YOU.
OR PERHAPS MY DEAR FRIEND STEVEN SHOULD BE THE ONE TO TELL YOU--

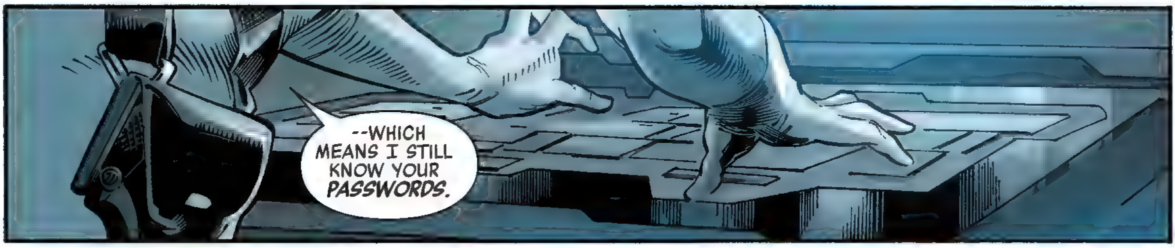

YOU TALK TOO MUCH.
GUH!
IT MAKES YOU DISTRACTED. I, ON THE OTHER HAND, HAVE LEARNED TO STAY FOCUSED ON WHAT'S BEFORE ME.
LOOK AT HIM, ZEMO--LOOK AT YOUR "BEST FRIEND." YOU CANNOT SAVE HIM. AND WHEN YOU WAKE, HE WILL BE *GONE.*
STEVEN...
NO...
THAT'S REASON ENOUGH TO KEEP YOU ALIVE.
I APPRECIATE THE ASSISTANCE, BARNES.
I WAS ABOUT TO SAY THE SAME TO YOU, YOUR MAJESTY--BUT YOU SHOULD GET MOVING...
...*I'LL* TAKE CARE OF *ZEMO.*

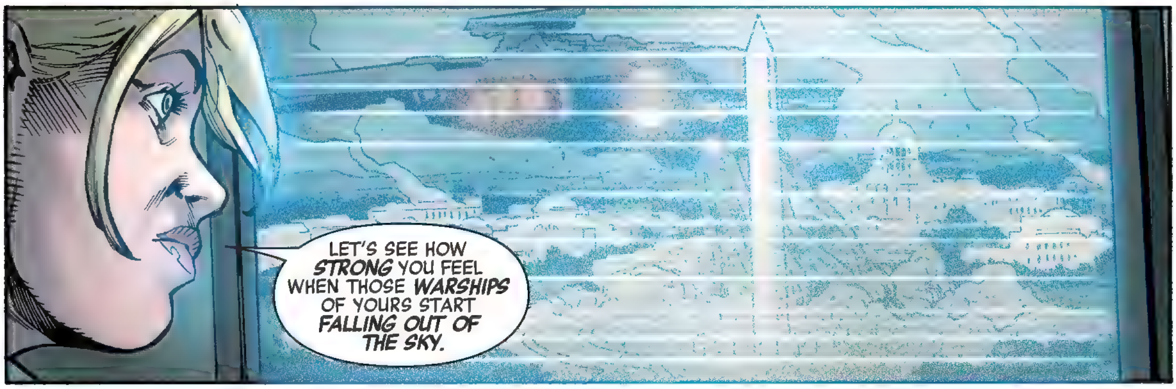

HAIL HYDRA!
THE SUPREME LEADER WAS SO HEARTBROKEN BY YOUR DISLOYALTY-- I WAS HAPPY TO OFFER MY SERVICES IN HELPING YOU BECOME A BIT MORE...*COOPERATIVE.*
NOW BE A DEAR, AND BRING ME MY TEA.
YES, DOCTOR FAUSTUS.
WONDERFUL, COMMANDER CARTER. REALLY, JUST WONDERFUL. YOU'VE MADE SO MUCH PROGRESS IN OUR SESSIONS!
WE HAVE SO MUCH HISTORY, YOU AND I. AND I THOUGHT THAT THE DAY YOU PUT A BULLET IN CAPTAIN AMERICA'S CHEST WAS MY CROWNING ACHIEVEMENT.
BUT I MIGHT JUST OUTDO THAT...BY MAKING YOU *LOVE* HIM AGAIN. WHAT DELIGHTFUL SYMMETRY.
YES, DOCTOR FAUSTUS--
MM. PERFECT. JUST THE WAY I--
HRRK--
DON'T WORRY, THE TOXIN'S NOT LETHAL...

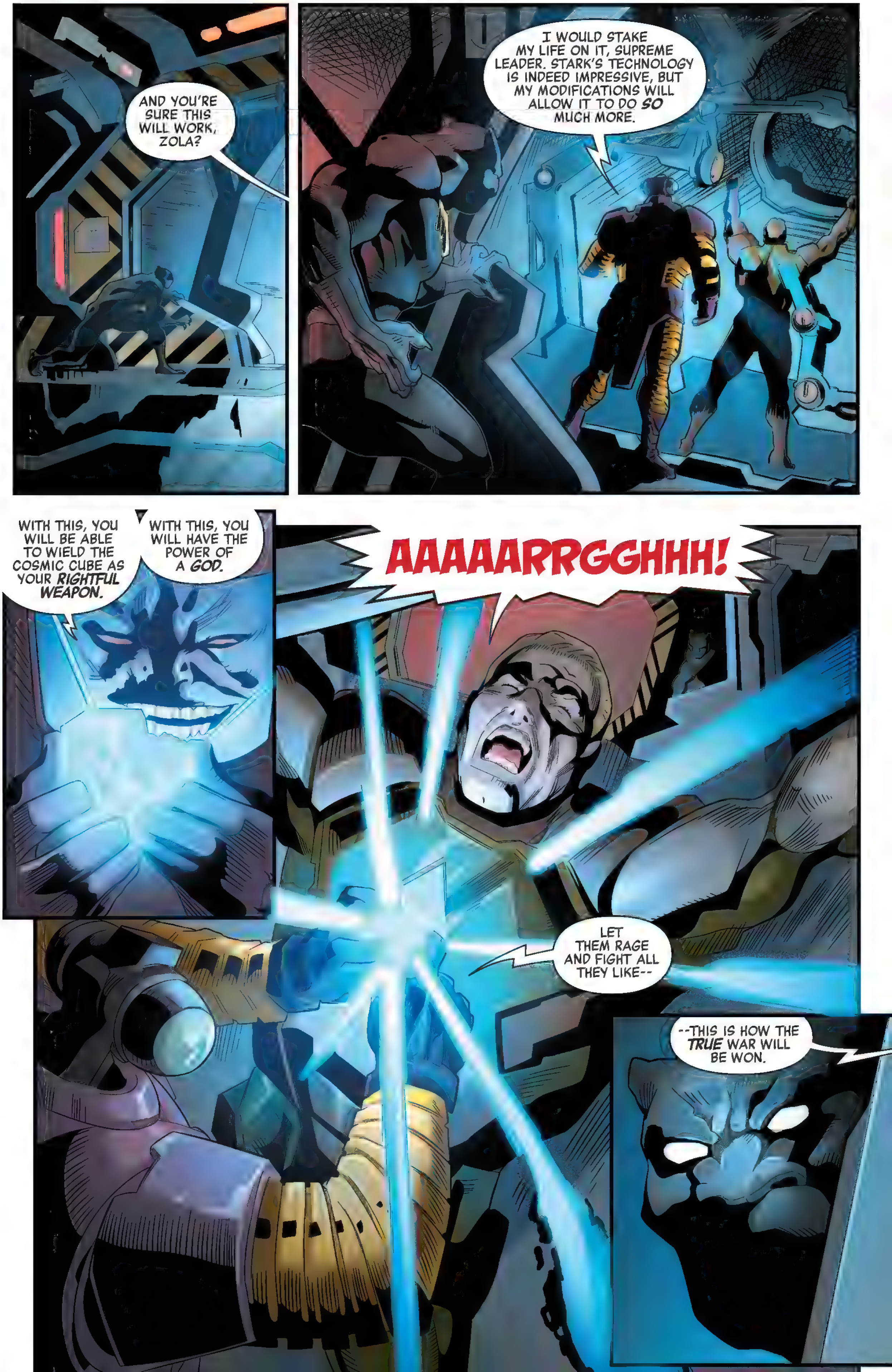

...BUT *I* AM.

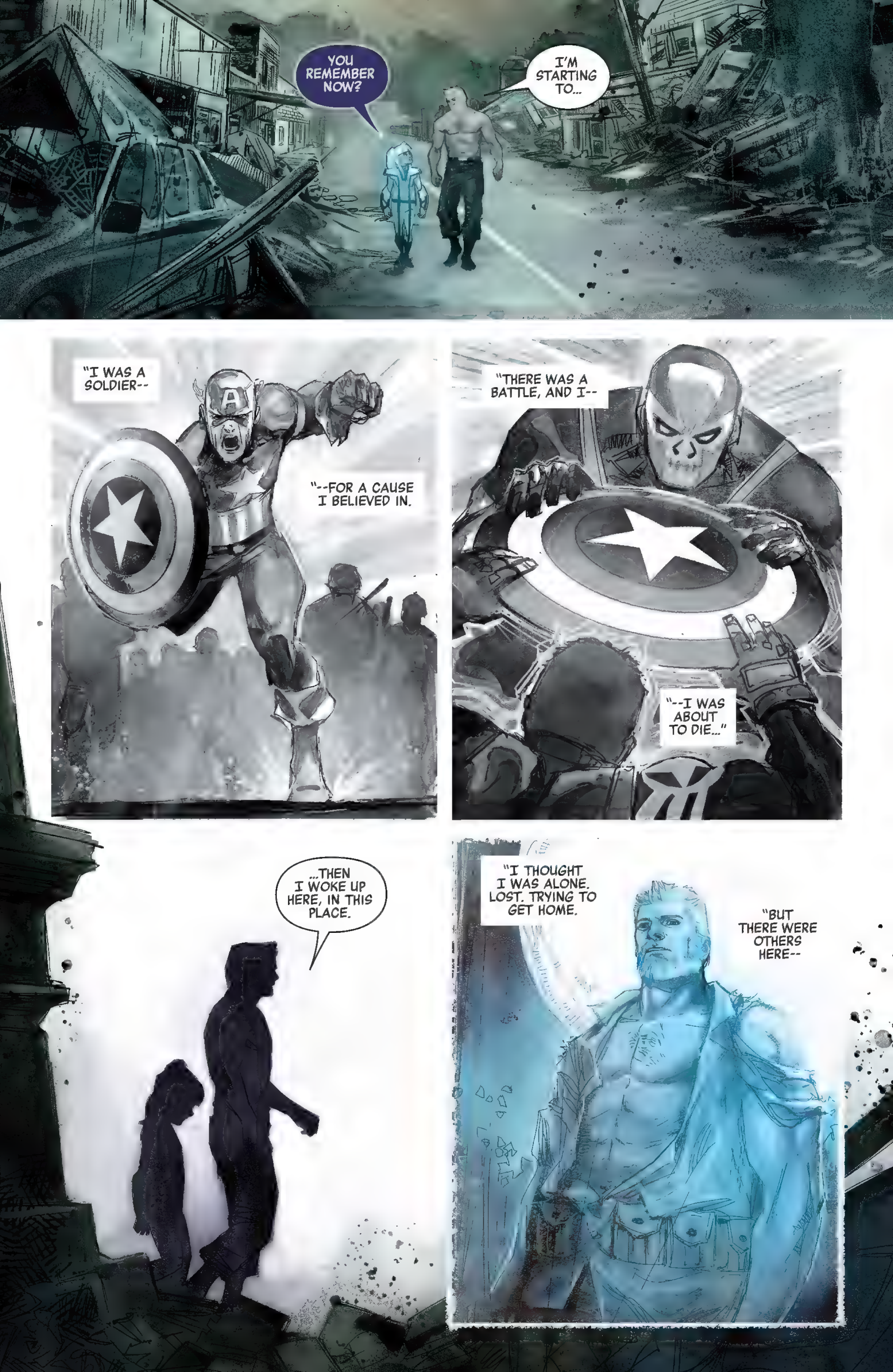

WE *DO* GO BACK A LONG WAY, FAUSTUS. AND I NEVER FORGOT THAT DAY, EITHER.
THAT'S WHY I LISTENED TO RECORDINGS OF YOUR VOICE CONSTANTLY FOR MONTHS AFTERWARD--

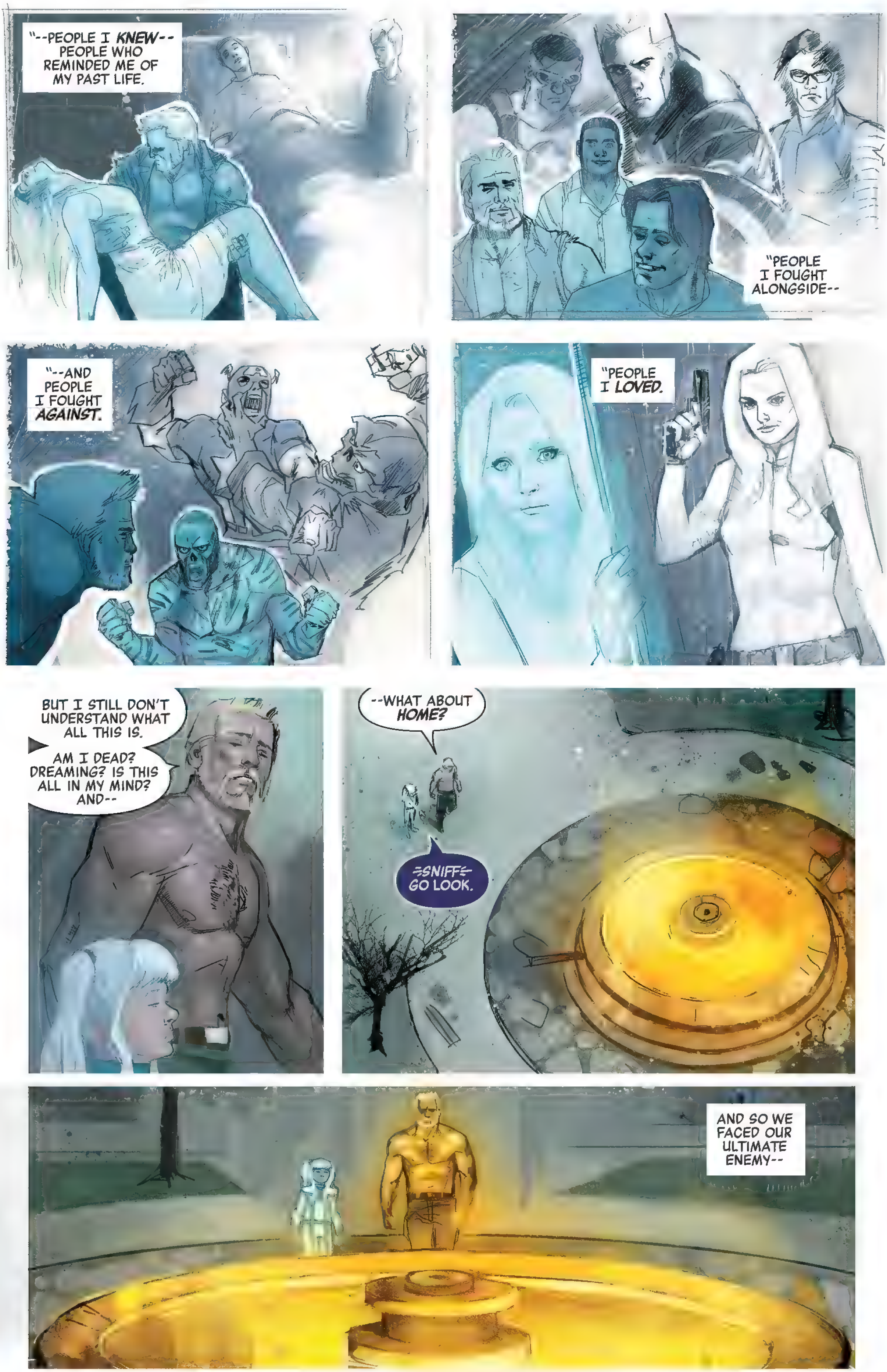

--TO BUILD UP AN *IMMUNITY* TO IT.
NOW, AS FOR *YOU,* STEVE--YOU'RE ALWAYS TELLING ME IT'S THE *REAL* YOU--

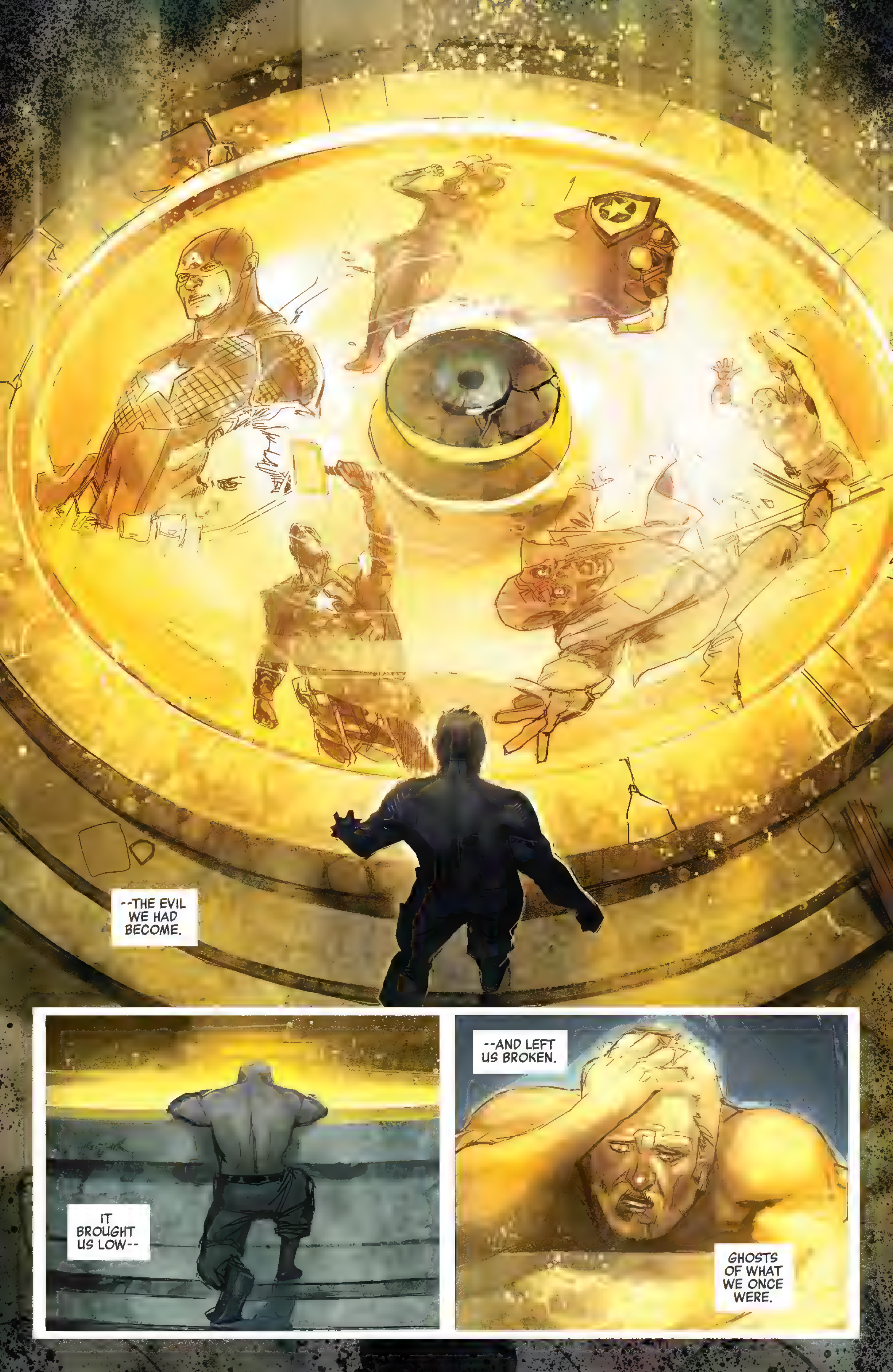

--WHICH MEANS I STILL KNOW YOUR *PASSWORDS.*

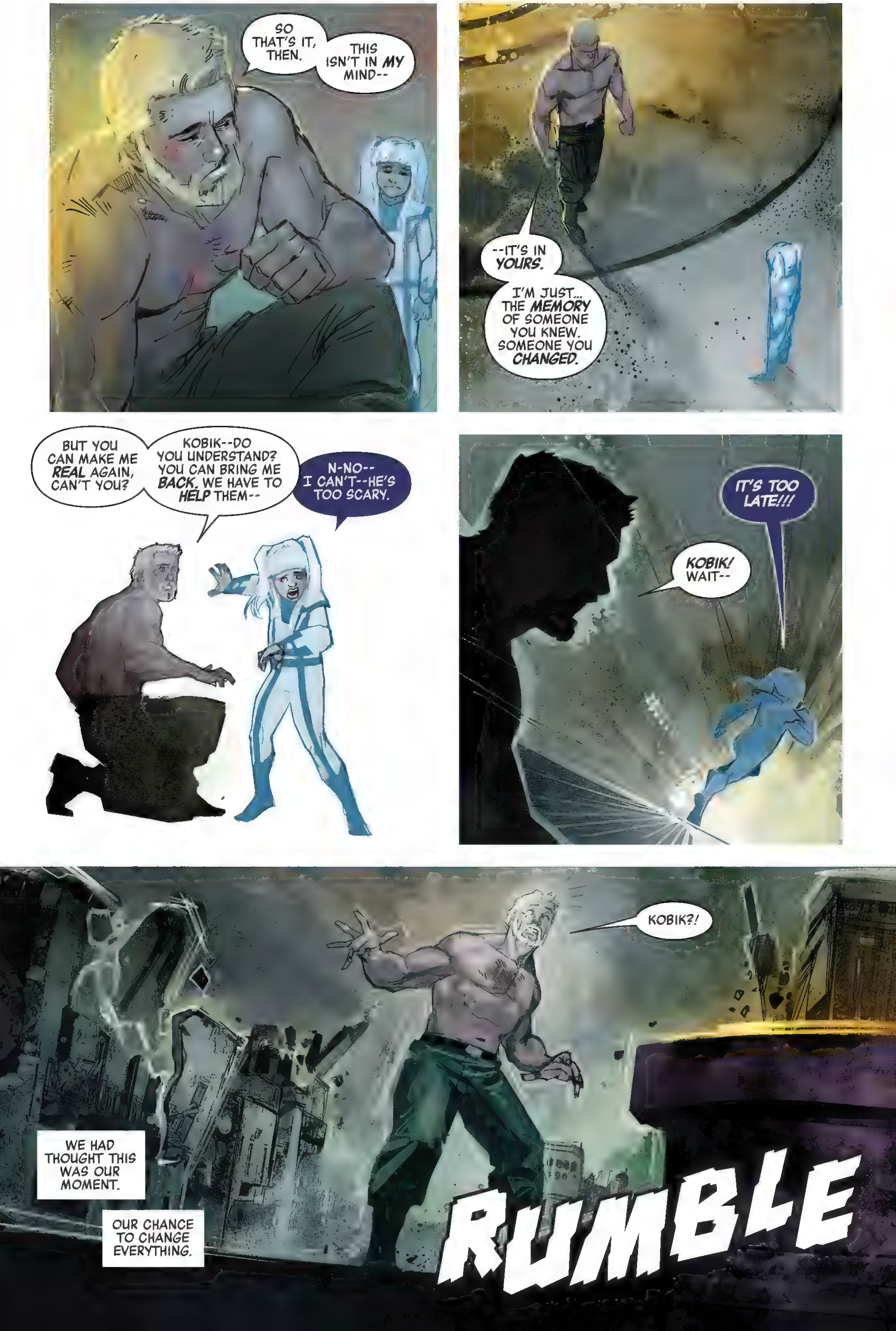

LET'S SEE HOW *STRONG* YOU FEEL WHEN THOSE *WARSHIPS* OF YOURS START *FALLING OUT OF THE SKY.*

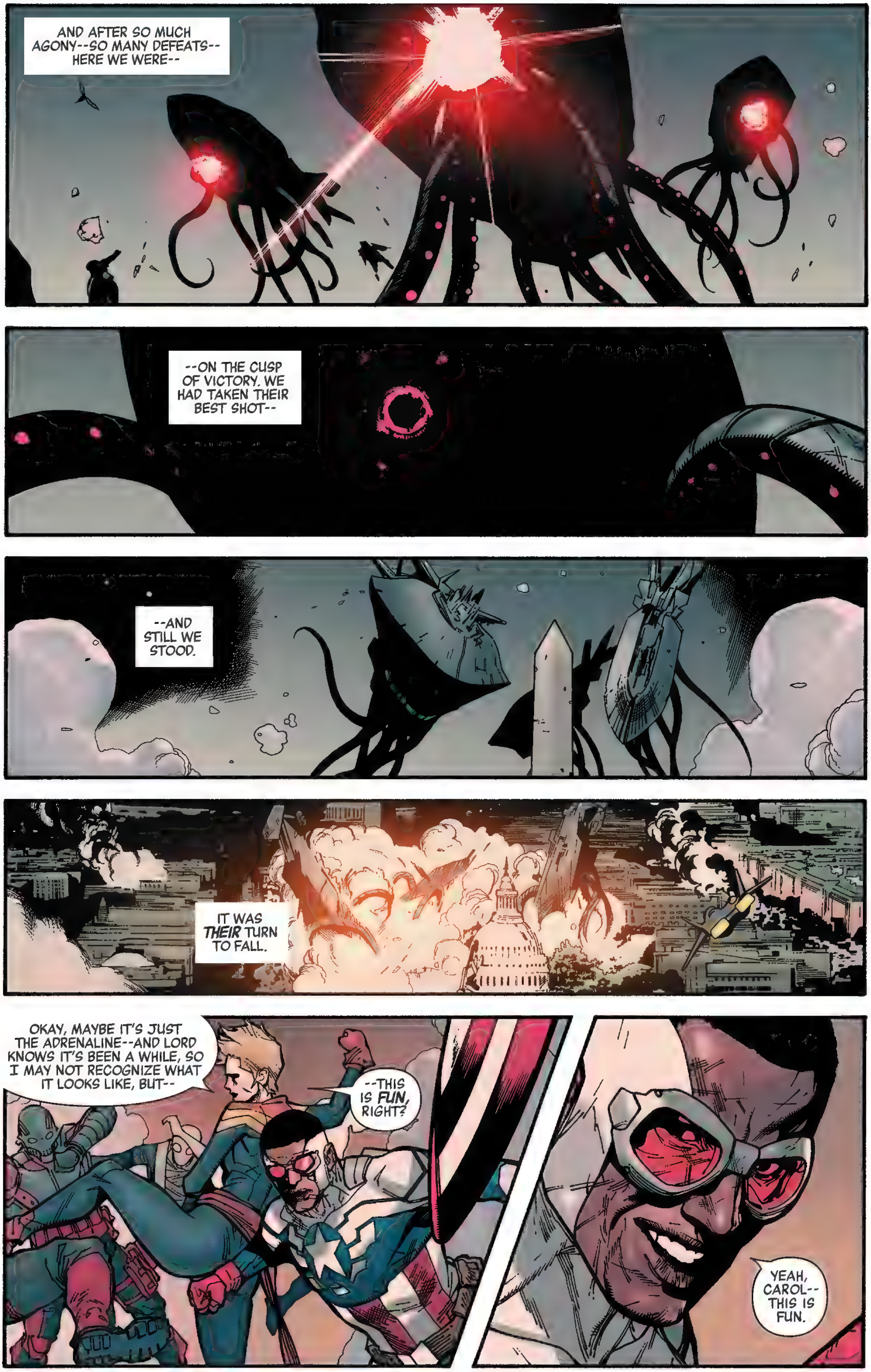

AND YOU'RE SURE THIS WILL WORK, ZOLA?
I WOULD STAKE MY LIFE ON IT, SUPREME LEADER. STARK'S TECHNOLOGY IS INDEED IMPRESSIVE, BUT MY MODIFICATIONS WILL ALLOW IT TO DO *SO* MUCH MORE.
WITH THIS, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO WIELD THE COSMIC CUBE AS YOUR *RIGHTFUL WEAPON*.
WITH THIS, YOU WILL HAVE THE POWER OF A *GOD*.
AAAAARRGGHHH!
LET THEM RAGE AND FIGHT ALL THEY LIKE--
--THIS IS HOW THE *TRUE* WAR WILL BE WON.

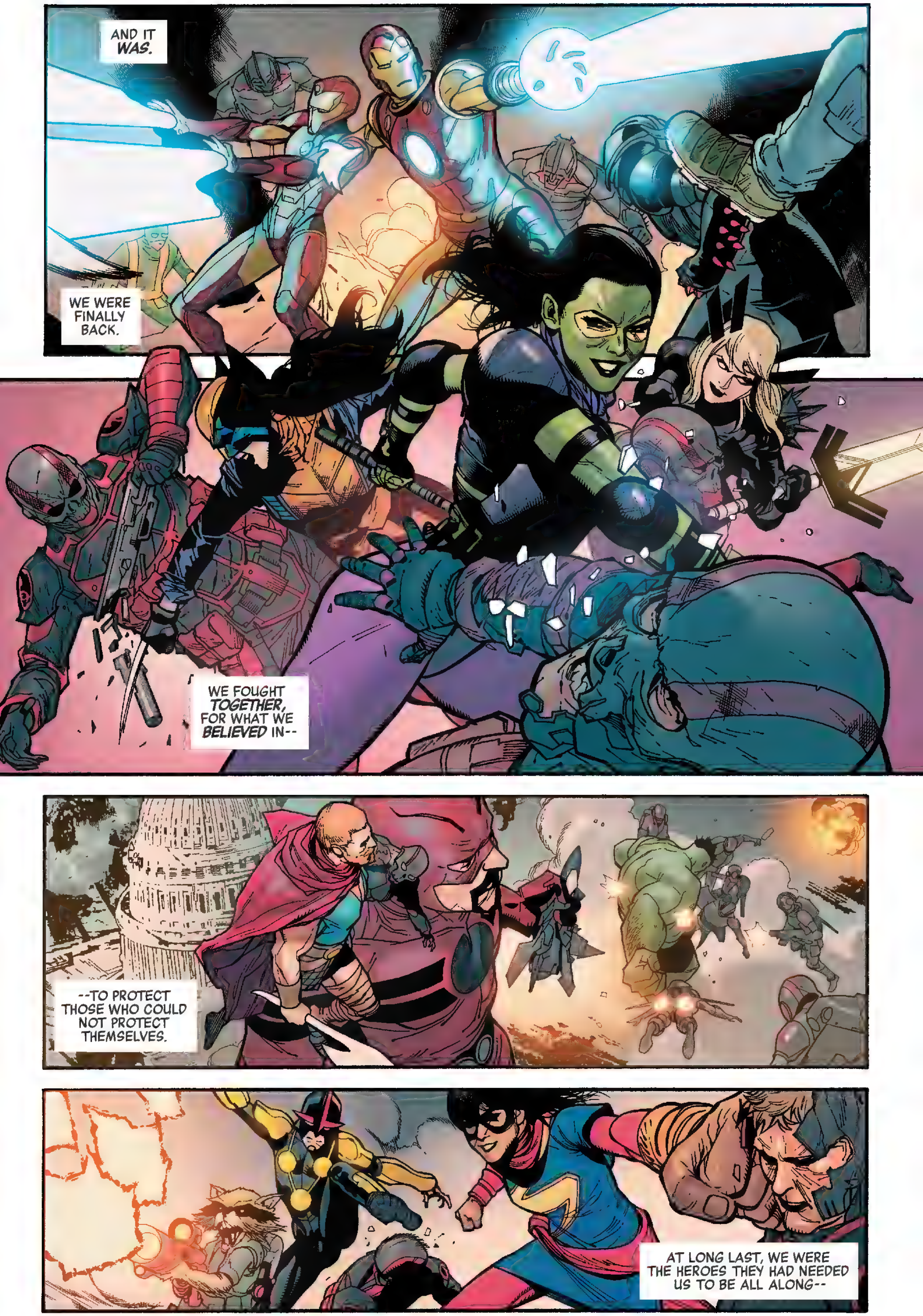

YOU REMEMBER NOW?
I'M STARTING TO...
"I WAS A SOLDIER--
"--FOR A CAUSE I BELIEVED IN.
"THERE WAS A BATTLE, AND I--
"--I WAS ABOUT TO DIE..."
...THEN I WOKE UP HERE, IN THIS PLACE.
"I THOUGHT I WAS ALONE. LOST. TRYING TO GET HOME.
"BUT THERE WERE OTHERS HERE--

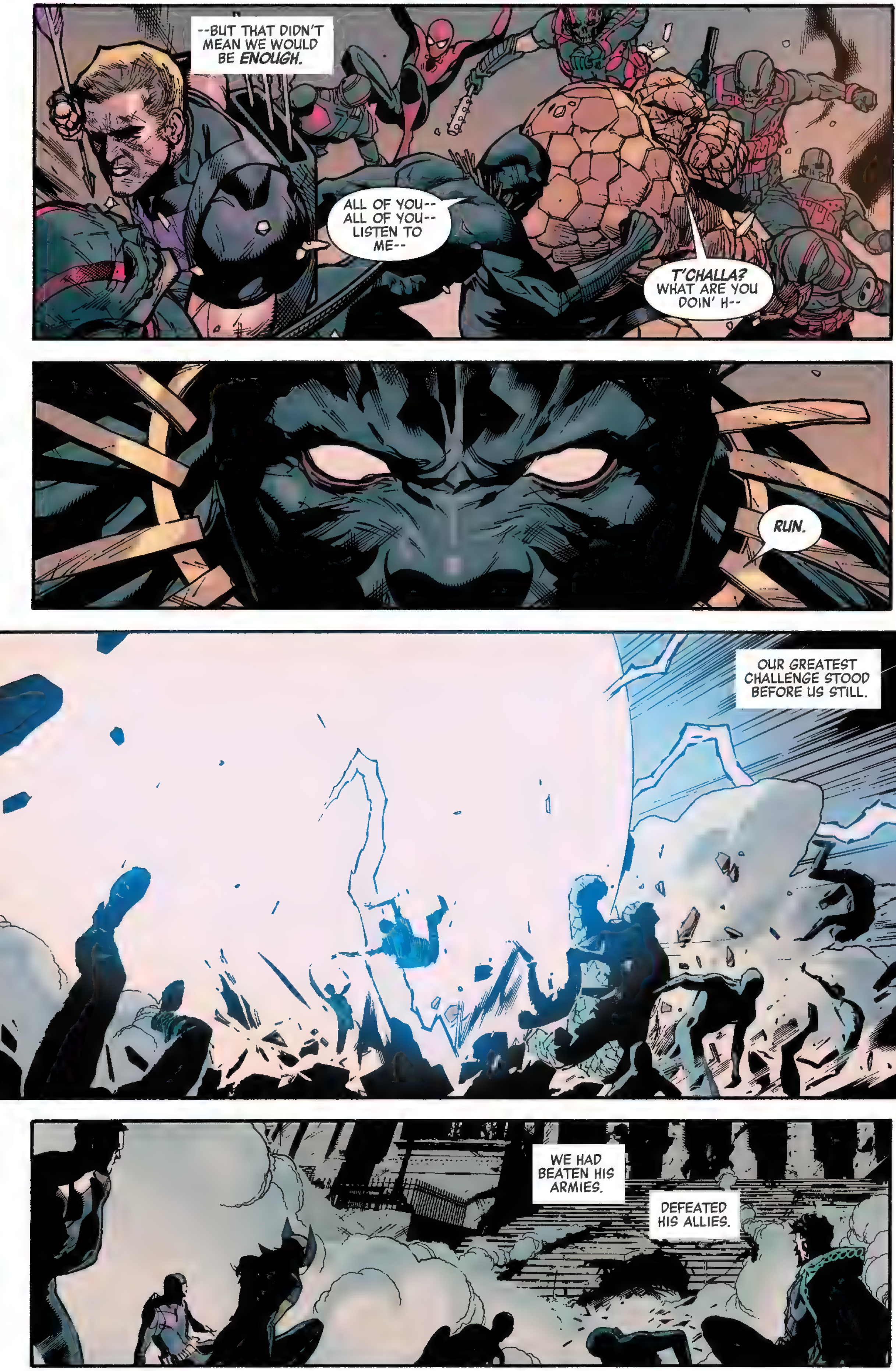

"--PEOPLE I *KNEW*--PEOPLE WHO REMINDED ME OF MY PAST LIFE.
"PEOPLE I FOUGHT ALONGSIDE--
"--AND PEOPLE I FOUGHT *AGAINST*.
"PEOPLE I *LOVED*.
BUT I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT ALL THIS IS.
AM I DEAD? DREAMING? IS THIS ALL IN MY MIND? AND--
--WHAT ABOUT *HOME?*
=SNIFF= GO LOOK.
AND SO WE FACED OUR ULTIMATE ENEMY--

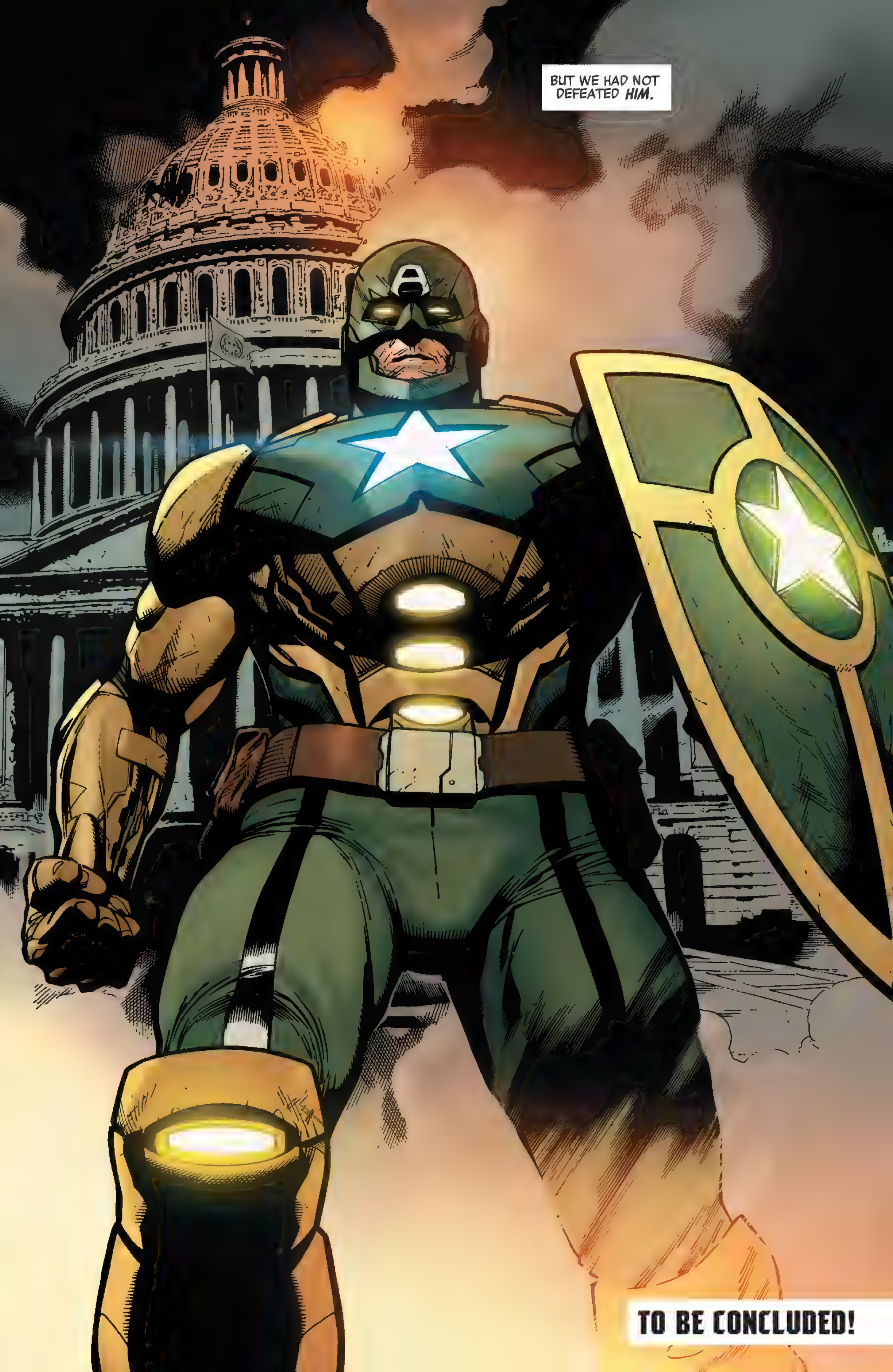

--THE EVIL WE HAD BECOME.
IT BROUGHT US LOW--
--AND LEFT US BROKEN.
GHOSTS OF WHAT WE ONCE WERE.


SO THAT'S IT, THEN.
THIS ISN'T IN *MY* MIND--
--IT'S IN *YOURS.*
I'M JUST... THE *MEMORY* OF SOMEONE YOU KNEW. SOMEONE YOU *CHANGED.*
BUT YOU CAN MAKE ME *REAL* AGAIN, CAN'T YOU?
KOBIK--DO YOU UNDERSTAND? YOU CAN BRING ME *BACK.* WE HAVE TO *HELP* THEM--
N-NO-- I CAN'T--HE'S TOO SCARY.
*IT'S TOO LATE!!!*
*KOBIK!* WAIT--
KOBIK?!
WE HAD THOUGHT THIS WAS OUR MOMENT.
OUR CHANCE TO CHANGE EVERYTHING.
RUMBLE


AND AFTER SO MUCH AGONY--SO MANY DEFEATS--HERE WE WERE--
--ON THE CUSP OF VICTORY. WE HAD TAKEN THEIR BEST SHOT--
--AND STILL WE STOOD.
IT WAS *THEIR* TURN TO FALL.
OKAY, MAYBE IT'S JUST THE ADRENALINE--AND LORD KNOWS IT'S BEEN A WHILE, SO I MAY NOT RECOGNIZE WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE, BUT--
--THIS IS *FUN*, RIGHT?
YEAH, CAROL--THIS IS FUN.


AND IT *WAS.*
WE WERE FINALLY BACK.
WE FOUGHT *TOGETHER,* FOR WHAT WE *BELIEVED* IN--
--TO PROTECT THOSE WHO COULD NOT PROTECT THEMSELVES.
AT LONG LAST, WE WERE THE HEROES THEY HAD NEEDED US TO BE ALL ALONG--

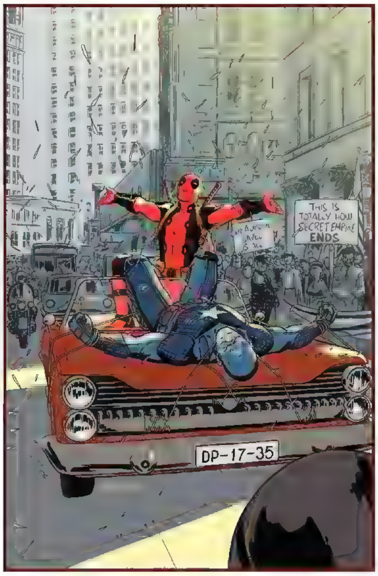

--BUT THAT DIDN'T MEAN WE WOULD BE *ENOUGH.*
ALL OF YOU-- ALL OF YOU-- LISTEN TO ME--
*T'CHALLA?* WHAT ARE YOU DOIN' H--
*RUN.*
OUR GREATEST CHALLENGE STOOD BEFORE US STILL.
WE HAD BEATEN HIS ARMIES.
DEFEATED HIS ALLIES.


BUT WE HAD NOT DEFEATED *HIM.*
TO BE CONCLUDED!

# SECRET EMPIRE

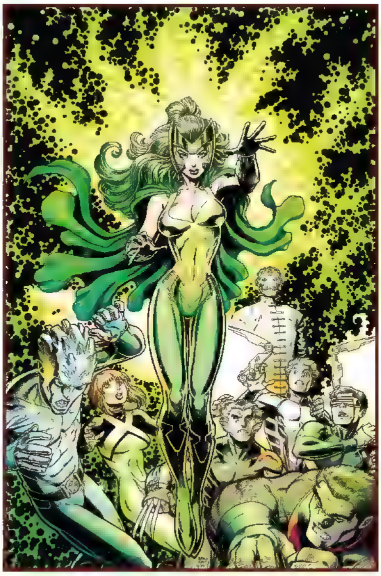
## AUGUST

### DEADPOOL #35


THIS IS TOTALLY HOW SECRET EMPIRE ENDS
DP-17-35

DEADPOOL SIDED WITH HYDRA--BUT THAT WAS A BAD IDEA AND NOW HE'S GOING TO TAKE THEM DOWN HIMSELF! ...RIGHT?

### X-MEN BLUE #9



JEAN AND JIMMY FIGHT TO RESCUE THEIR TEAMMATES FROM EMMA FROST!

### CHAMPIONS #11

HOPE SPRINGS FROM THE RUINS OF LAS VEGAS.

## BEYOND THE SHIELD

## DARKFORCE NEW YORK

### THE MIGHTY CAPTAIN MARVEL #8

CAPTAIN MARVEL AND HER NEW RECRUITS MAKE ONE LAST STAND AGAINST THE CHITAURI.

### DOCTOR STRANGE #24

DOCTOR STRANGE TAKES ON MORDO, WITH THE FATE OF NEW YORK AT STAKE!

# SECRET EMPIRE

## AUGUST

### AVENGERS #10

The Hydra Avengers are a deadly force--but why are they working together?

### U.S.AVENGERS #9

Squirrel Girl and Co. take the fight to Hydra in Paris.
Vive la Révolucion!

### SECRET WARRIORS #5

Quake's team fights for their future--and the fate of all Inhumans!

### AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #31

It's Parker Industries vs. the Superior Octopus, and only one can walk away...

## NEXT

SECRET EMPIRE
#10

THE CHANCES OF VICTORY HAVE NEVER BEEN LOWER. THE STAKES HAVE NEVER BEEN HIGHER.
IT ALL ENDS HERE.

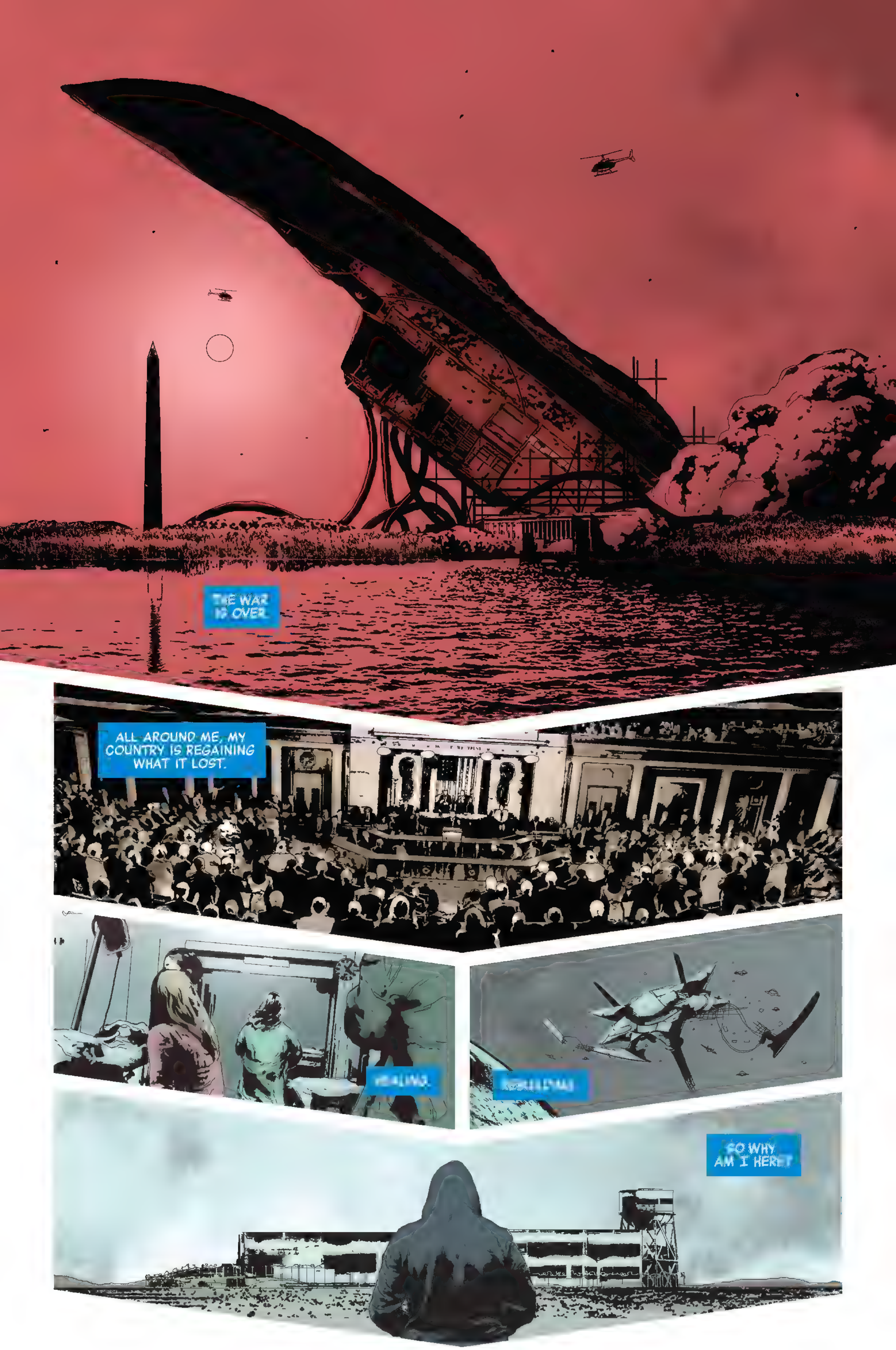
# SECRET EMPIRE™

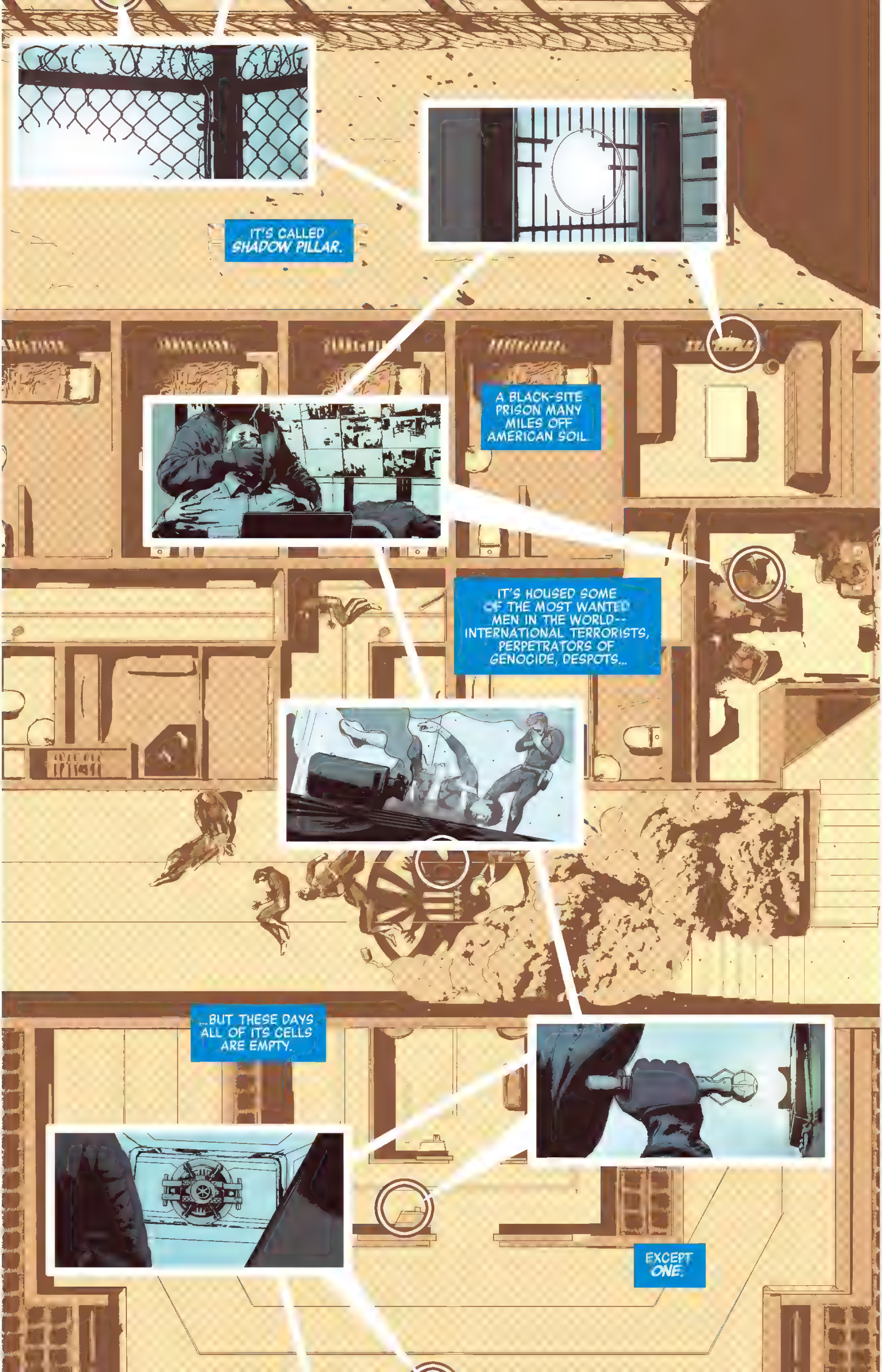
## OMEGA

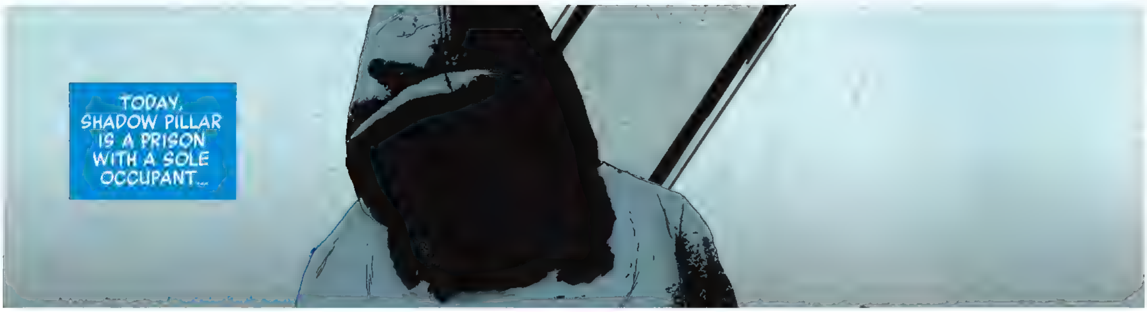
## #1

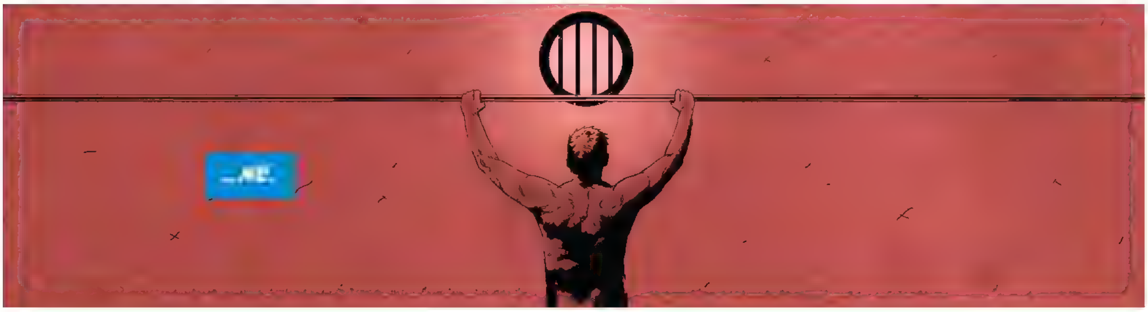
MARVEL
BROOKS

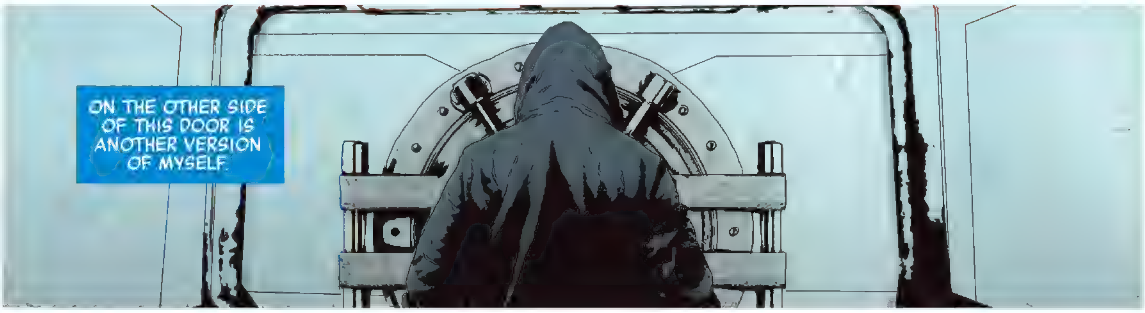
NICK SPENCER, ANDREA SORRENTINO, JOE BENNETT

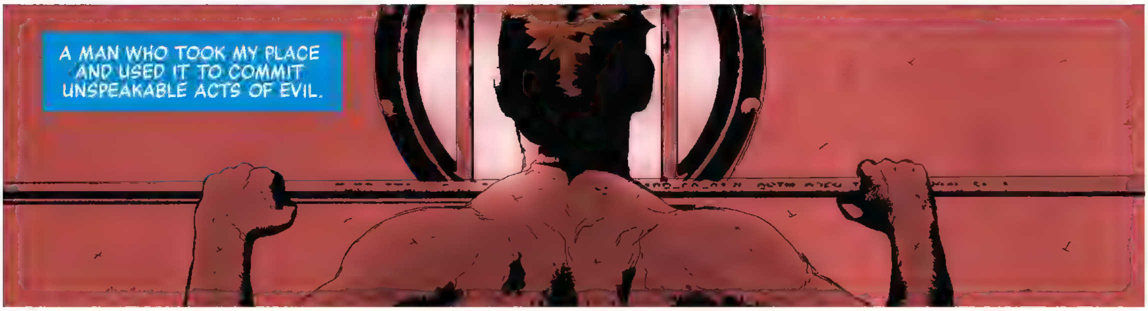

THE WAR IS OVER.
ALL AROUND ME, MY COUNTRY IS REGAINING WHAT IT LOST.
HEALING.
REBUILDING.
SO WHY AM I HERE?

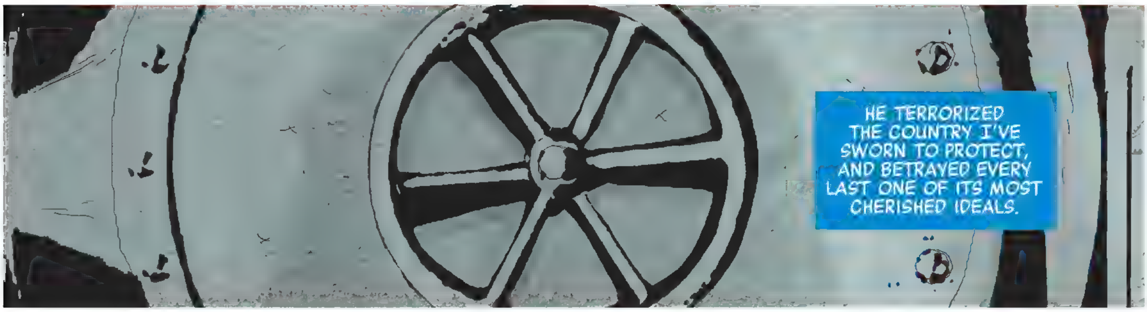

IT'S CALLED *SHADOW PILLAR.*
A BLACK-SITE PRISON MANY MILES OFF AMERICAN SOIL.
IT'S HOUSED SOME OF THE MOST WANTED MEN IN THE WORLD--INTERNATIONAL TERRORISTS, PERPETRATORS OF GENOCIDE, DESPOTS...
...BUT THESE DAYS ALL OF ITS CELLS ARE EMPTY.
EXCEPT *ONE.*

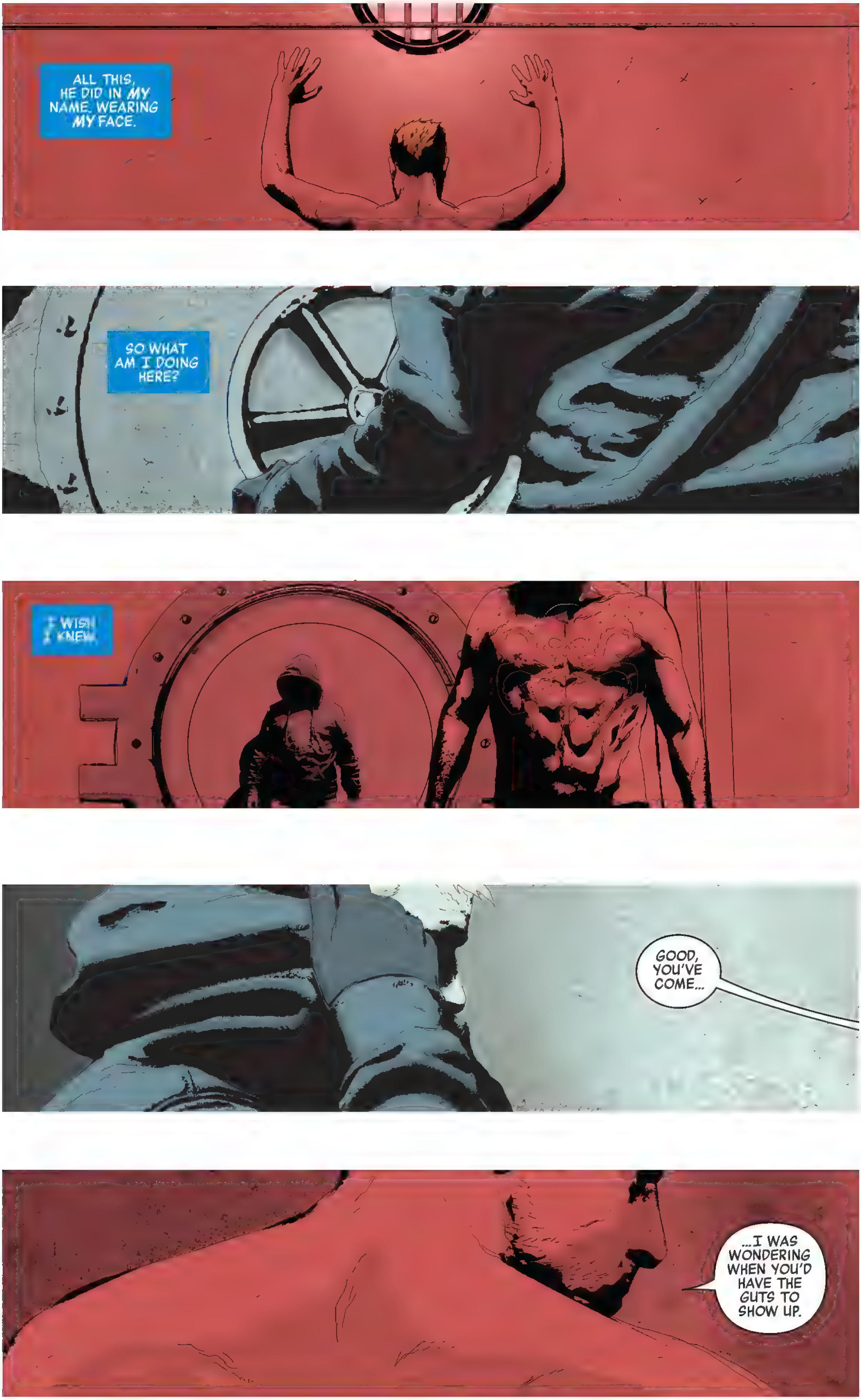

TODAY, SHADOW PILLAR IS A PRISON WITH A SOLE OCCUPANT...


...ME.


ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THIS DOOR IS ANOTHER VERSION OF MYSELF.


A MAN WHO TOOK MY PLACE AND USED IT TO COMMIT UNSPEAKABLE ACTS OF EVIL.


HE TERRORIZED THE COUNTRY I'VE SWORN TO PROTECT, AND BETRAYED EVERY LAST ONE OF ITS MOST CHERISHED IDEALS.


ALL THIS, HE DID IN *MY* NAME, WEARING *MY* FACE.
SO WHAT AM I DOING HERE?
I WISH I KNEW.
GOOD, YOU'VE COME...
...I WAS WONDERING WHEN YOU'D HAVE THE GUTS TO SHOW UP.

# SECRET EMPIRE
## OMEGA

A sentient Cosmic Cube named Kobik turned Steve Rogers, A.K.A. Captain America, into an agent of Hydra--and he used his mantle as the most trusted hero in the world to claim the United States for his new cause.

After several major losses, including the lives of Rick Jones and the Black Widow and the bombing of Las Vegas, the heroes of Earth united against Captain America and his Hydra Empire. With the last piece of the shattered Cosmic Cube, Sam Wilson and Bucky Barnes were able to restore Kobik, who'd hidden the memory of the original Captain America deep inside her fractured consciousness.

Kobik brought Steve Rogers back, and he defeated the villainous Captain America who'd taken his place. Without their leader, Hydra's regime has fallen, but the scars remain...

Writer ▪ Nick Spencer Artist ▪ Andrea Sorrentino
Additional Art ▪ Joe Bennett with Joe Pimentel, Scott Hanna & Rachelle Rosenberg
Letterer ▪ VC's Travis Lanham
Recap Page Art ▪ Andrea Sorrentino
Cover ▪ Mark Brooks
Variant Covers ▪ Michael Cho; Michael Turner & Peter Steigerwald; Andrea Sorrentino

Production Design ▪ Carlos Lao Assistant Editor ▪ Alanna Smith
Editor ▪ Tom Brevoort Editor in Chief ▪ Axel Alonso
Chief Creative Officer ▪ Joe Quesada President ▪ Dan Buckley
Executive Producer ▪ Alan Fine

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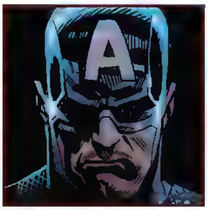
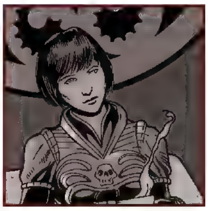
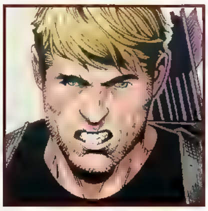
## Hydra

Hydra Command


Captain America


Madame Hydra

## The Underground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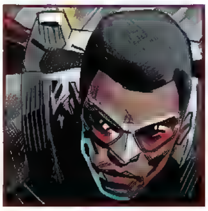
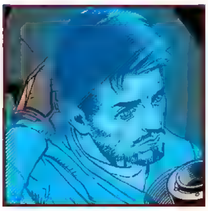
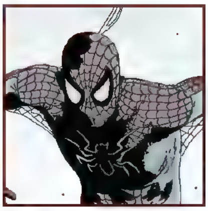
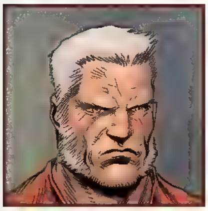
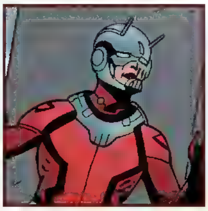
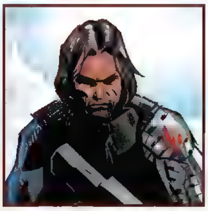

Captain America

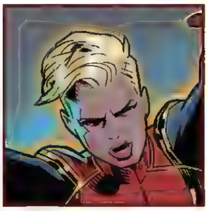

Tony Stark (A.I.)

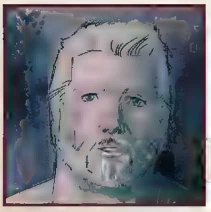

Spider-Man

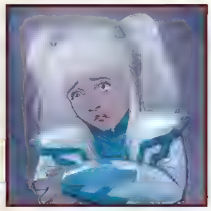

Old Man Logan

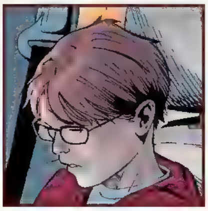

Ant-Man

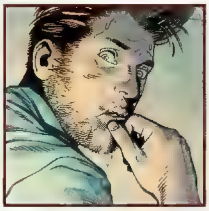

Winter Soldier

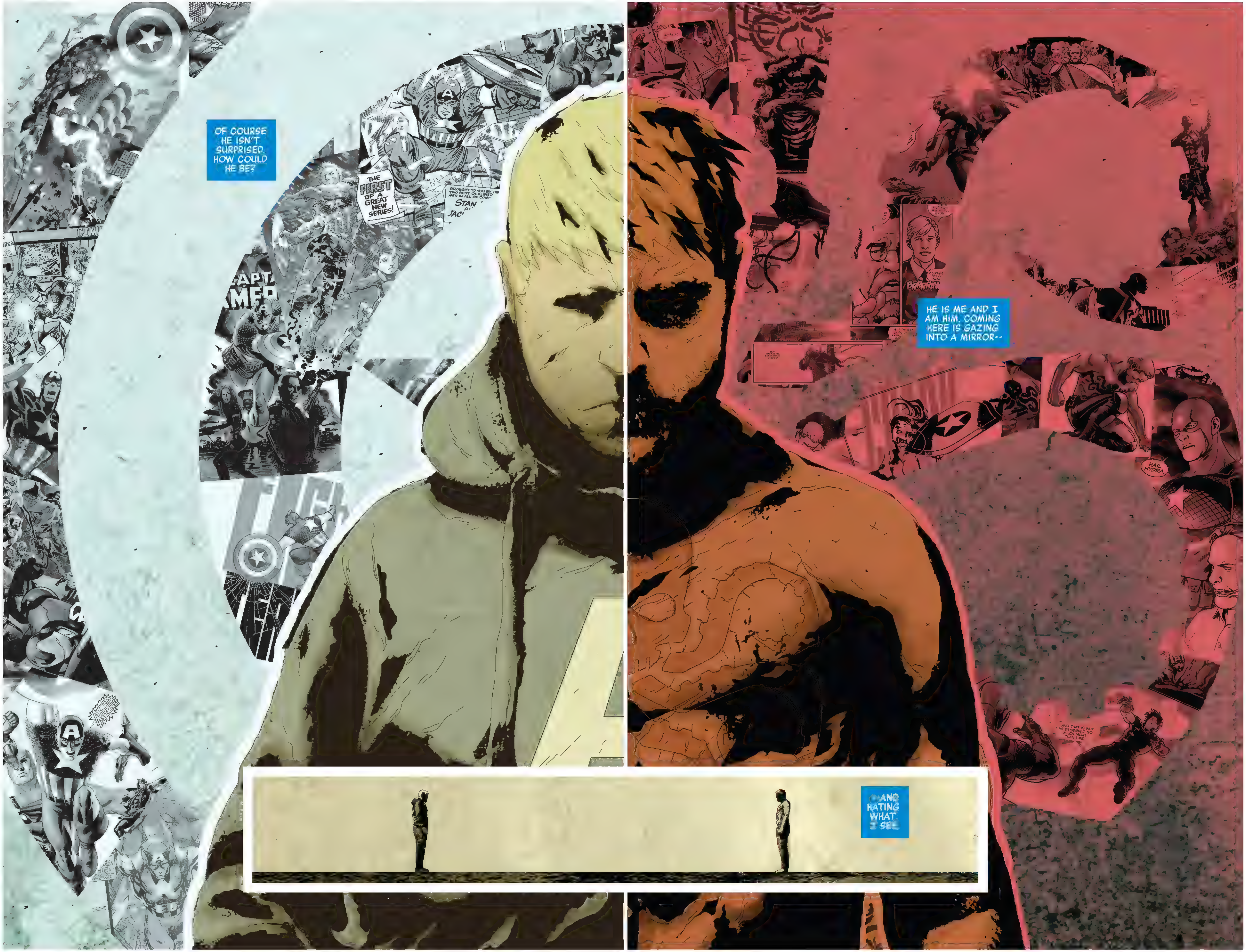

Captain Marvel

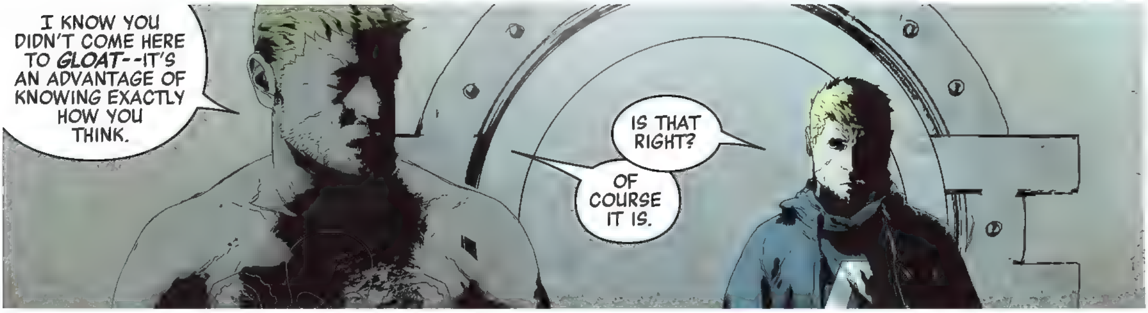

Steve Rogers

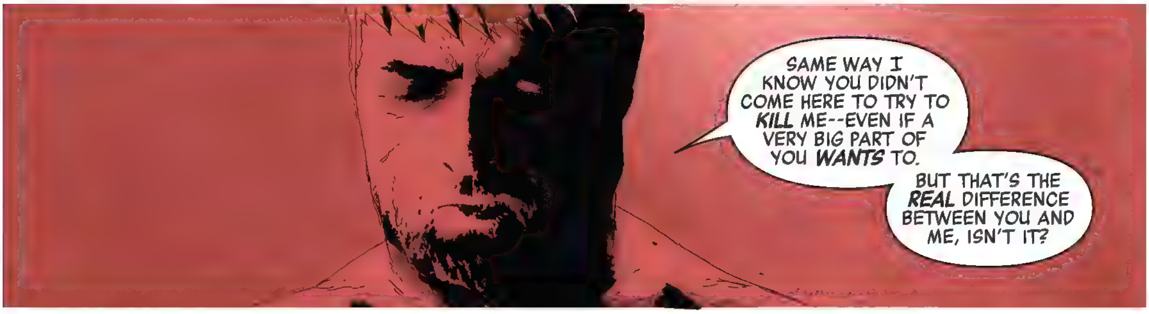

Kobik

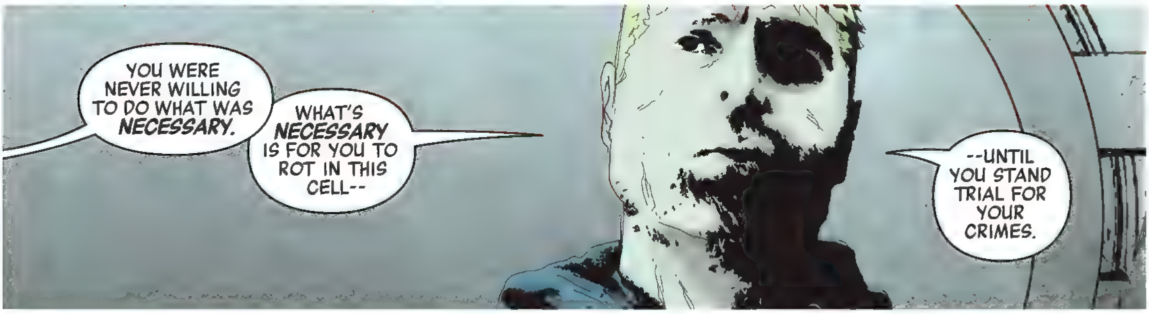

Jason McAllister

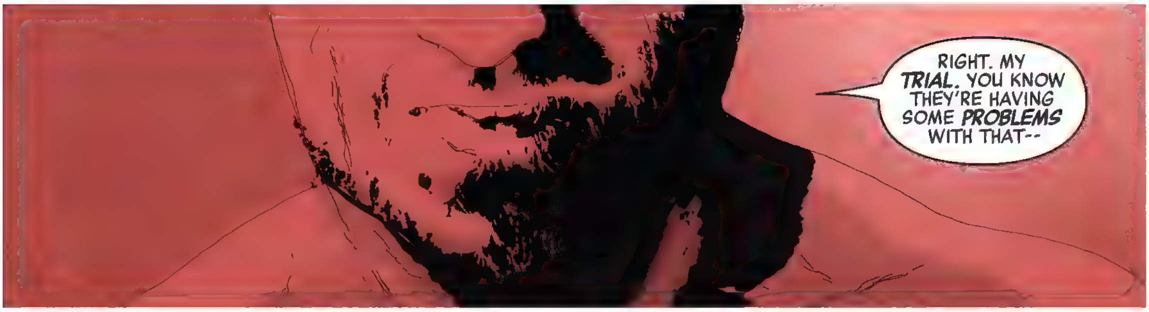

Brian McAllister

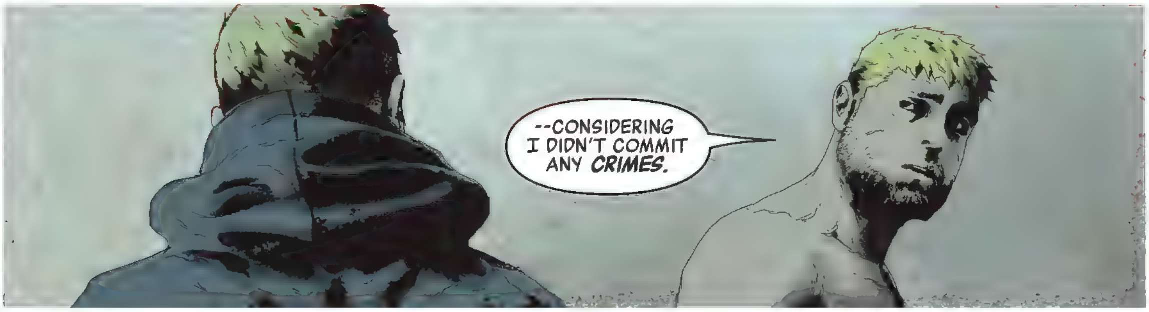

OF COURSE HE ISN'T SURPRISED. HOW COULD HE BE?
THE FIRST OF A GREAT NEW SERIES!
STAN
HE IS ME AND I AM HIM. COMING HERE IS GAZING INTO A MIRROR--
HAIL HYDRA.
--AND HATING WHAT I SEE.

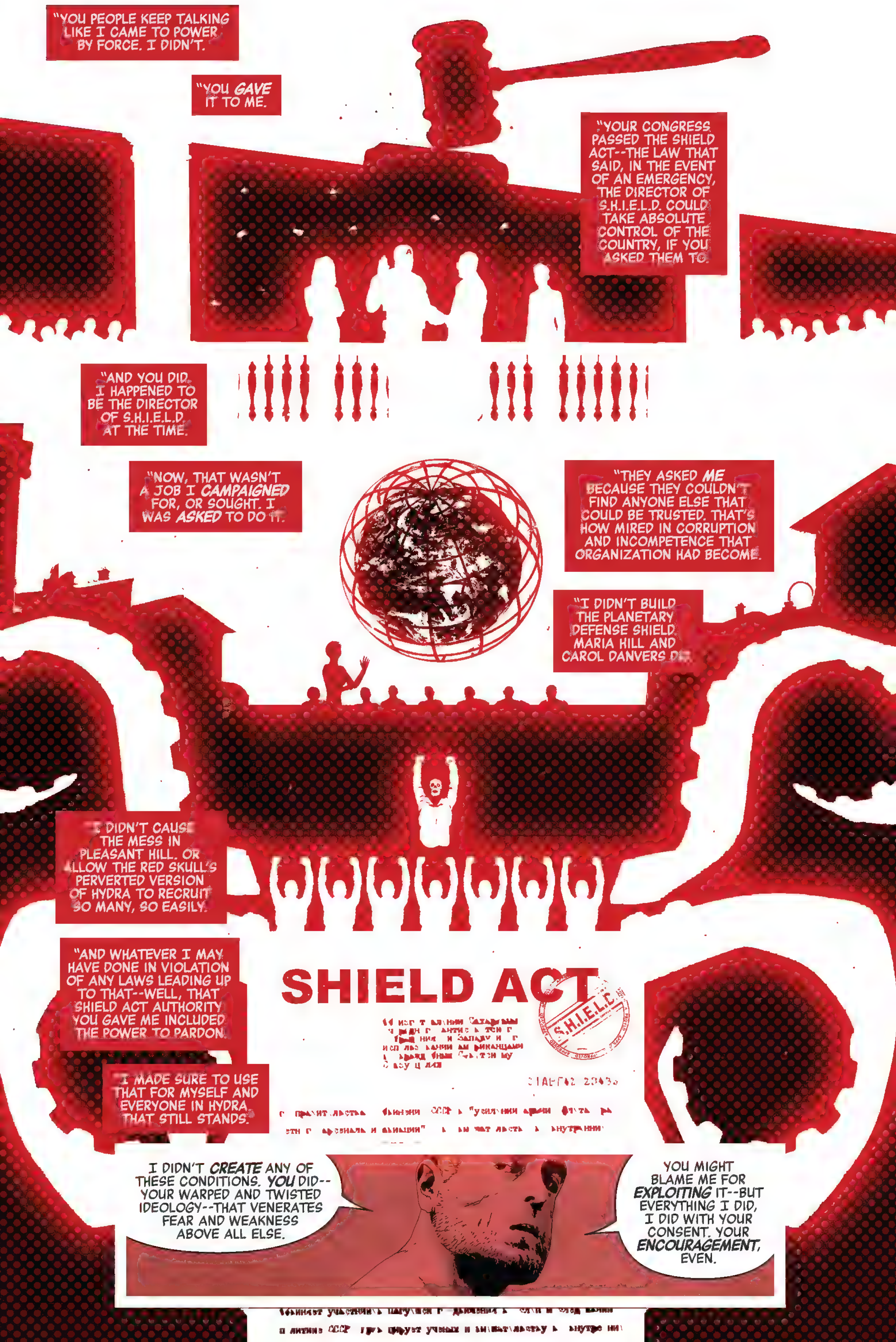

I KNOW YOU DIDN'T COME HERE TO **GLOAT**--IT'S AN ADVANTAGE OF KNOWING EXACTLY HOW YOU THINK.
IS THAT RIGHT?
OF COURSE IT IS.

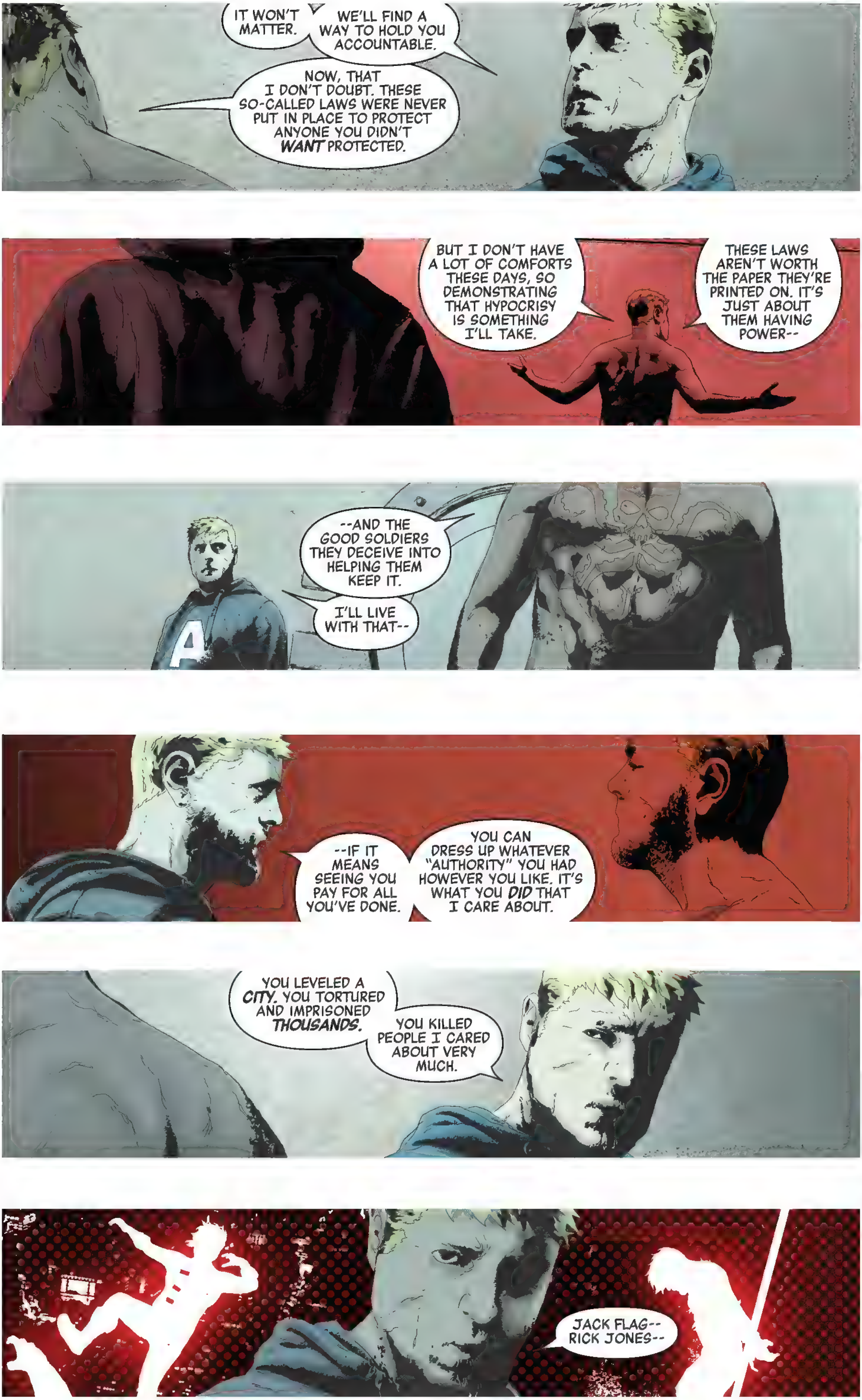

SAME WAY I KNOW YOU DIDN'T COME HERE TO TRY TO **KILL** ME--EVEN IF A VERY BIG PART OF YOU **WANTS** TO.
BUT THAT'S THE **REAL** DIFFERENCE BETWEEN YOU AND ME, ISN'T IT?

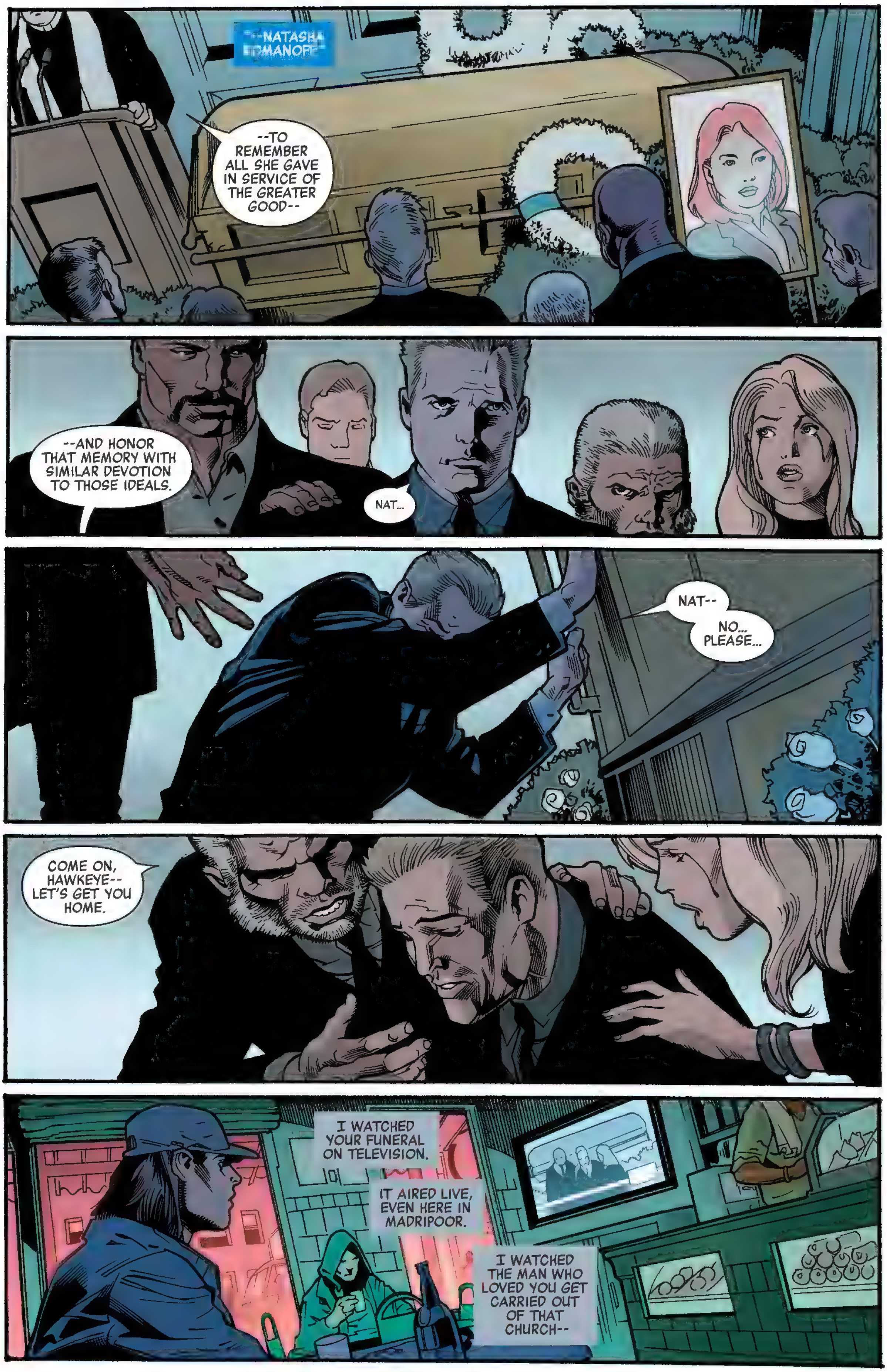

YOU WERE NEVER WILLING TO DO WHAT WAS **NECESSARY.**
WHAT'S **NECESSARY** IS FOR YOU TO ROT IN THIS CELL--
--UNTIL YOU STAND TRIAL FOR YOUR CRIMES.

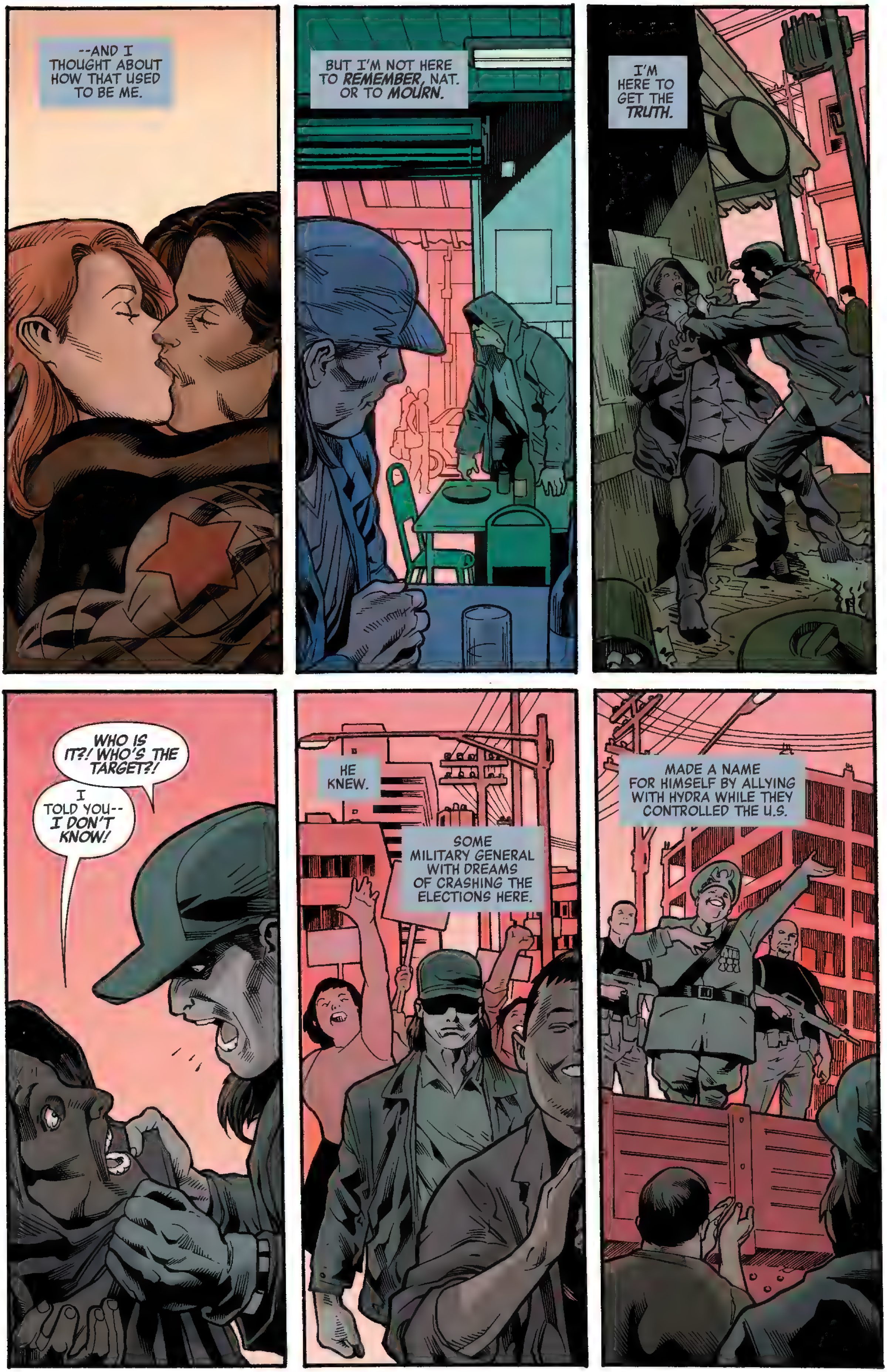

RIGHT. MY **TRIAL.** YOU KNOW THEY'RE HAVING SOME **PROBLEMS** WITH THAT--

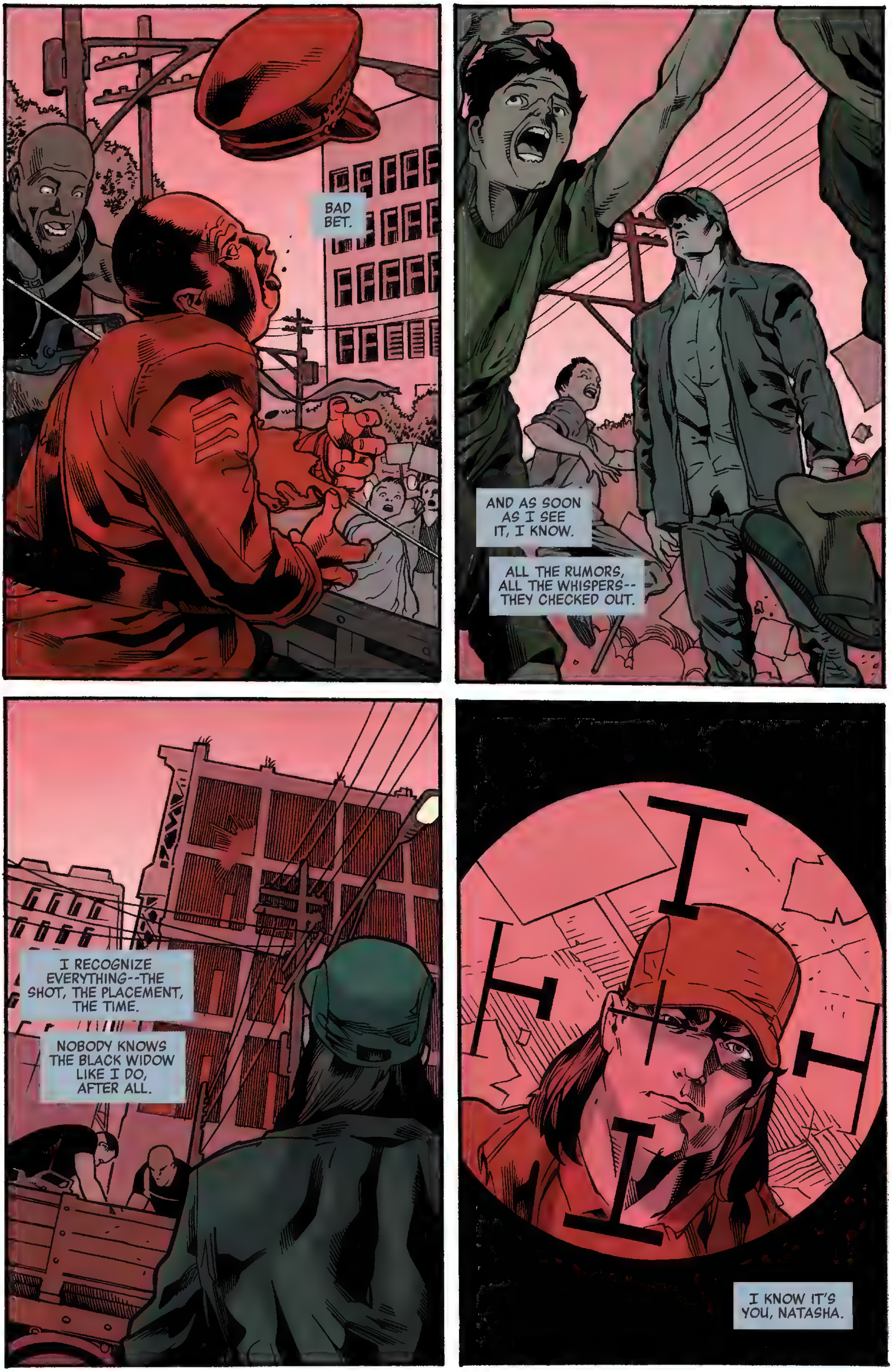

--CONSIDERING I DIDN'T COMMIT ANY **CRIMES.**

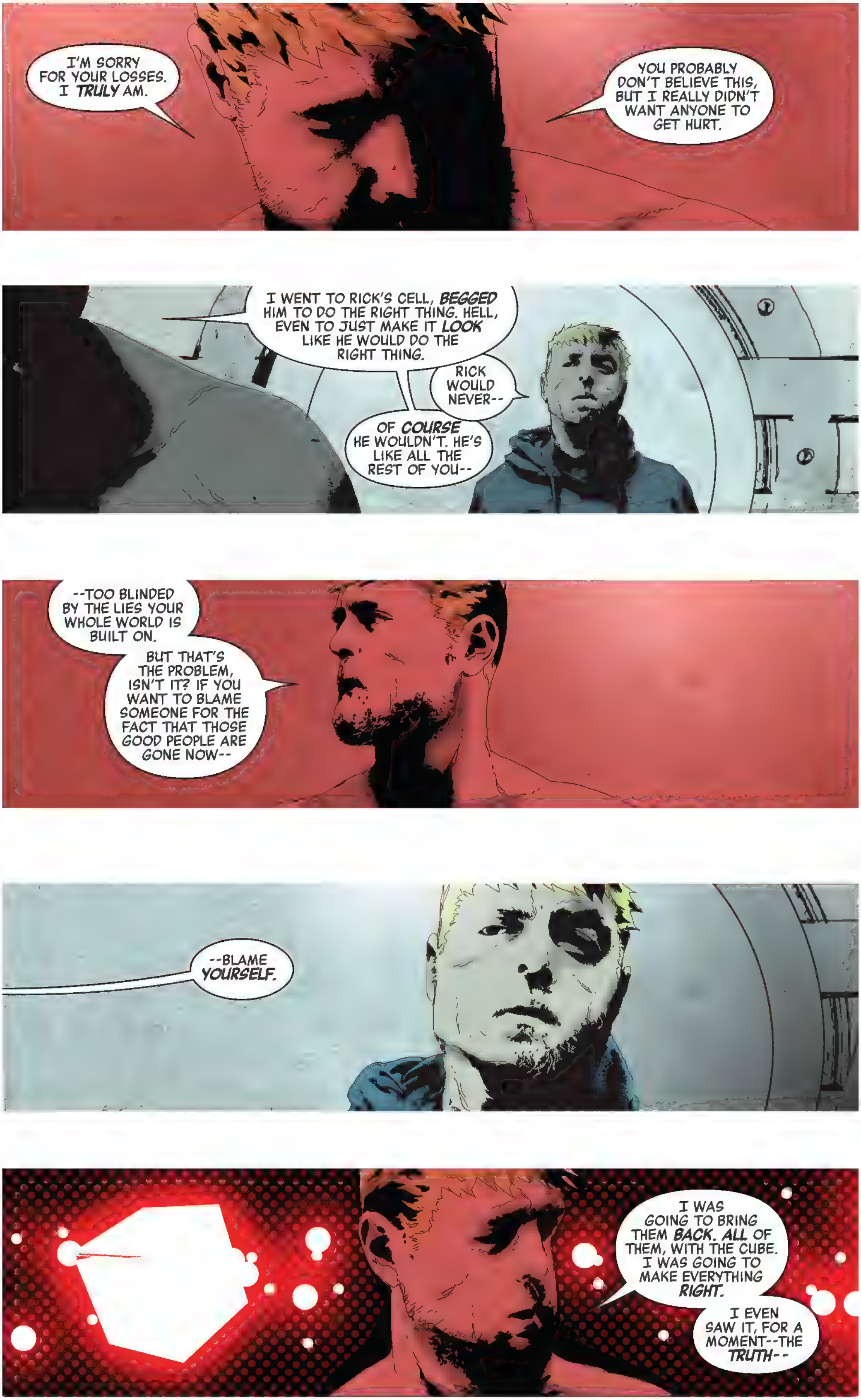

"YOU PEOPLE KEEP TALKING LIKE I CAME TO POWER BY FORCE. I DIDN'T.
"YOU *GAVE* IT TO ME.
"YOUR CONGRESS PASSED THE SHIELD ACT--THE LAW THAT SAID, IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY, THE DIRECTOR OF S.H.I.E.L.D. COULD TAKE ABSOLUTE CONTROL OF THE COUNTRY, IF YOU ASKED THEM TO.
"AND YOU DID. I HAPPENED TO BE THE DIRECTOR OF S.H.I.E.L.D. AT THE TIME.
"NOW, THAT WASN'T A JOB I *CAMPAIGNED* FOR, OR SOUGHT. I WAS *ASKED* TO DO IT.
"THEY ASKED *ME* BECAUSE THEY COULDN'T FIND ANYONE ELSE THAT COULD BE TRUSTED. THAT'S HOW MIRED IN CORRUPTION AND INCOMPETENCE THAT ORGANIZATION HAD BECOME.
"I DIDN'T BUILD THE PLANETARY DEFENSE SHIELD. MARIA HILL AND CAROL DANVERS DID.
"I DIDN'T CAUSE THE MESS IN PLEASANT HILL, OR ALLOW THE RED SKULL'S PERVERTED VERSION OF HYDRA TO RECRUIT SO MANY, SO EASILY.
"AND WHATEVER I MAY HAVE DONE IN VIOLATION OF ANY LAWS LEADING UP TO THAT--WELL, THAT SHIELD ACT AUTHORITY YOU GAVE ME INCLUDED THE POWER TO PARDON.
"I MADE SURE TO USE THAT FOR MYSELF AND EVERYONE IN HYDRA THAT STILL STANDS.
SHIELD ACT
S.H.I.E.L.D.
I DIDN'T *CREATE* ANY OF THESE CONDITIONS. *YOU* DID--YOUR WARPED AND TWISTED IDEOLOGY--THAT VENERATES FEAR AND WEAKNESS ABOVE ALL ELSE.
YOU MIGHT BLAME ME FOR *EXPLOITING* IT--BUT EVERYTHING I DID, I DID WITH YOUR CONSENT. YOUR *ENCOURAGEMENT*, EVEN.

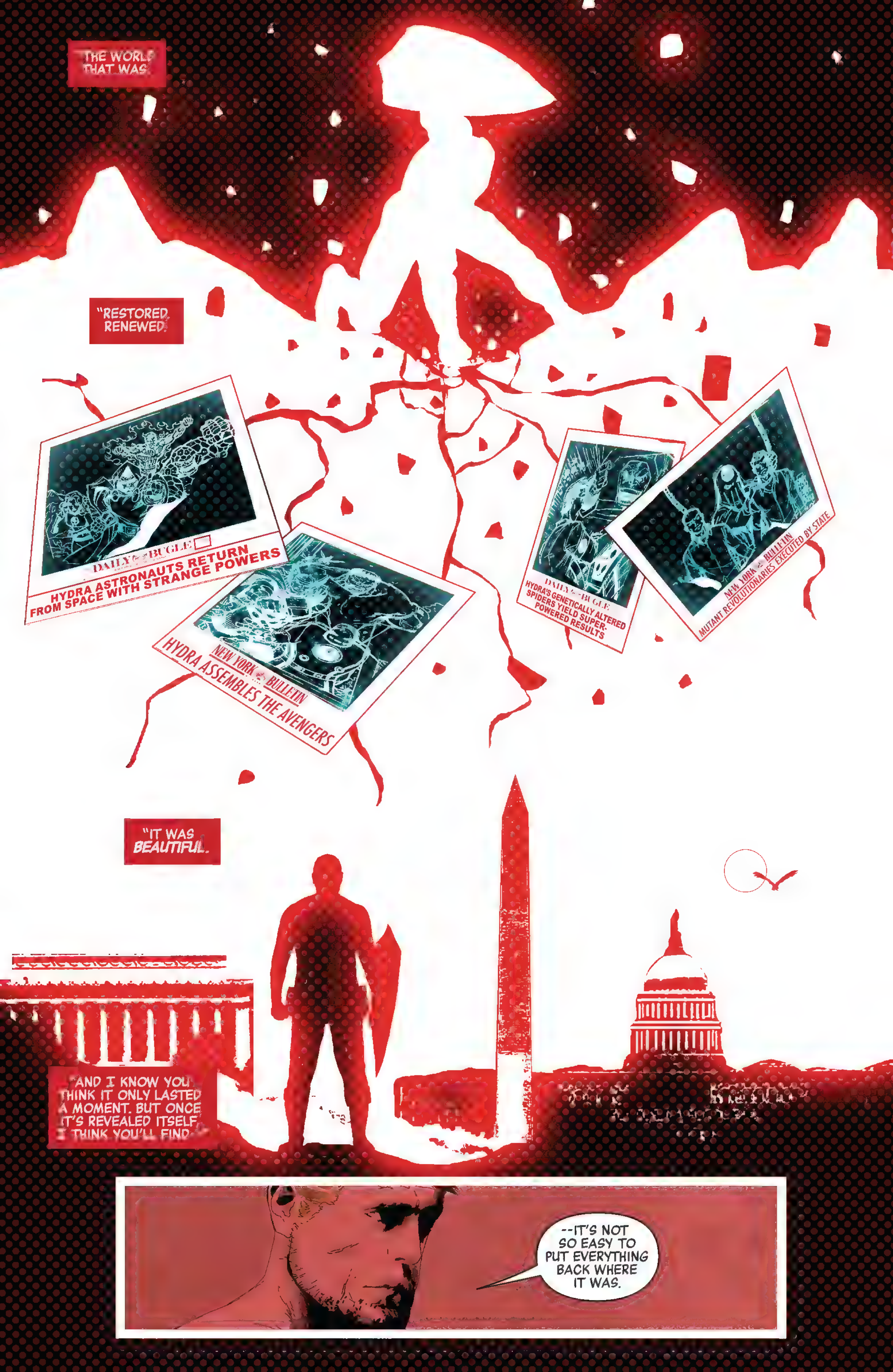

IT WON'T MATTER.
WE'LL FIND A WAY TO HOLD YOU ACCOUNTABLE.
NOW, THAT I DON'T DOUBT. THESE SO-CALLED LAWS WERE NEVER PUT IN PLACE TO PROTECT ANYONE YOU DIDN'T *WANT* PROTECTED.
BUT I DON'T HAVE A LOT OF COMFORTS THESE DAYS, SO DEMONSTRATING THAT HYPOCRISY IS SOMETHING I'LL TAKE.
THESE LAWS AREN'T WORTH THE PAPER THEY'RE PRINTED ON. IT'S JUST ABOUT THEM HAVING POWER--
--AND THE GOOD SOLDIERS THEY DECEIVE INTO HELPING THEM KEEP IT.
I'LL LIVE WITH THAT--
--IF IT MEANS SEEING YOU PAY FOR ALL YOU'VE DONE.
YOU CAN DRESS UP WHATEVER "AUTHORITY" YOU HAD HOWEVER YOU LIKE. IT'S WHAT YOU *DID* THAT I CARE ABOUT.
YOU LEVELED A *CITY.* YOU TORTURED AND IMPRISONED *THOUSANDS.*
YOU KILLED PEOPLE I CARED ABOUT VERY MUCH.
JACK FLAG-- RICK JONES--

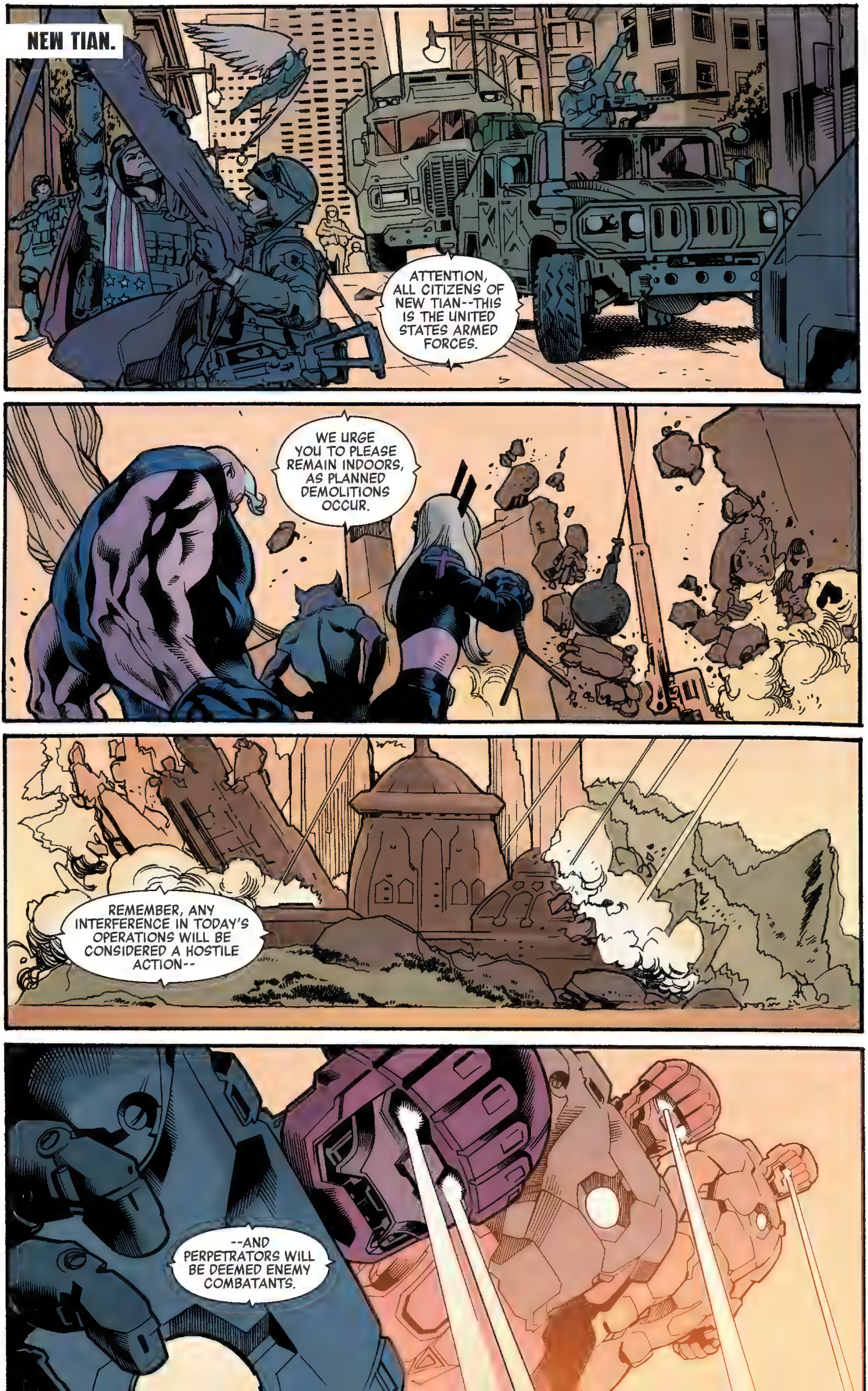

--NATASHA ROMANOFF--
--TO REMEMBER ALL SHE GAVE IN SERVICE OF THE GREATER GOOD--
--AND HONOR THAT MEMORY WITH SIMILAR DEVOTION TO THOSE IDEALS.
NAT...
NAT--
NO... PLEASE...
COME ON, HAWKEYE-- LET'S GET YOU HOME.
I WATCHED YOUR FUNERAL ON TELEVISION.
IT AIRED LIVE, EVEN HERE IN MADRIPOOR.
I WATCHED THE MAN WHO LOVED YOU GET CARRIED OUT OF THAT CHURCH--

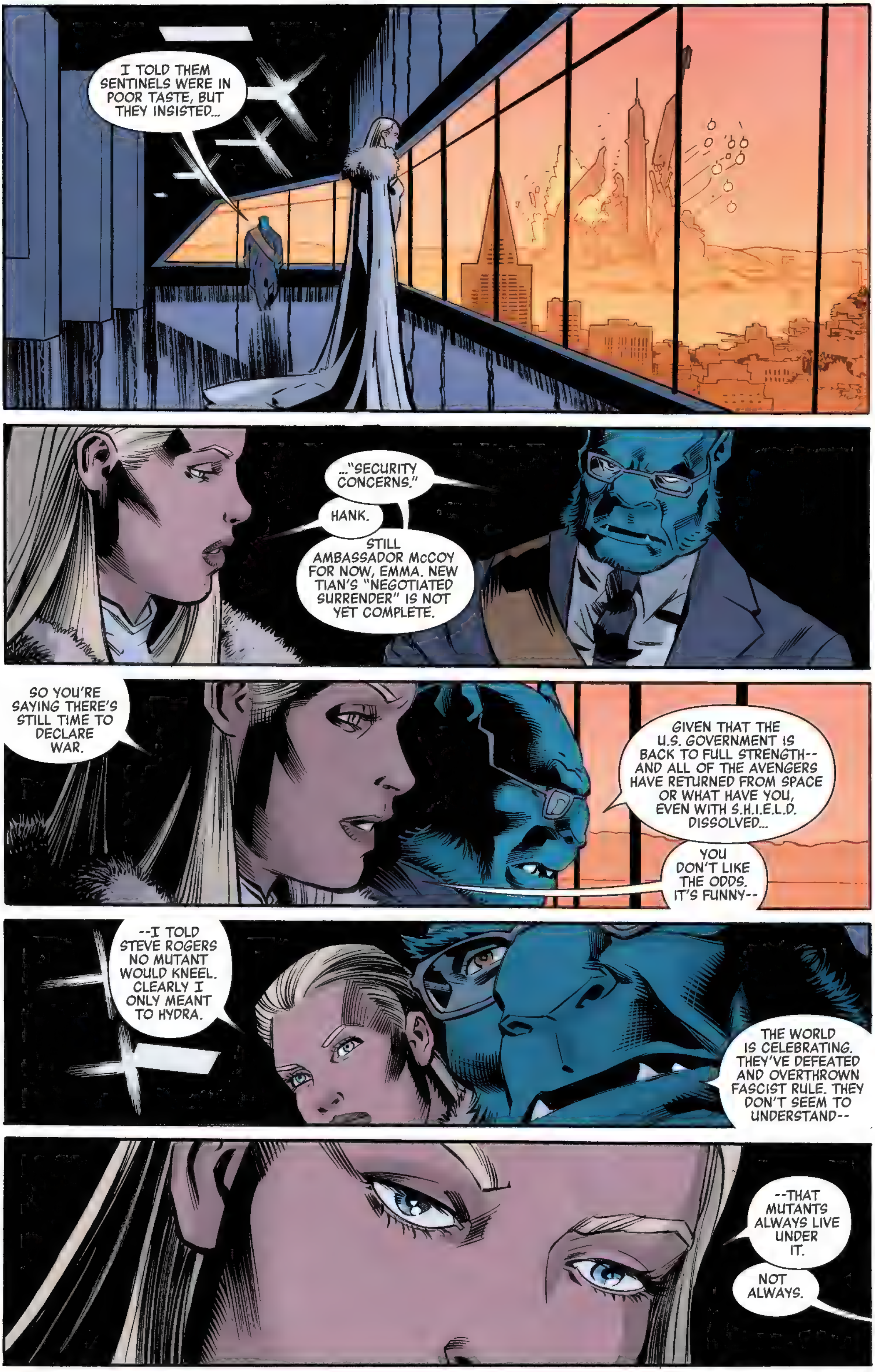

--AND I THOUGHT ABOUT HOW THAT USED TO BE ME.
BUT I'M NOT HERE TO *REMEMBER*, NAT. OR TO *MOURN.*
I'M HERE TO GET THE *TRUTH.*
*WHO IS IT?! WHO'S THE TARGET?!*
I TOLD YOU-- *I DON'T KNOW!*
HE KNEW.
SOME MILITARY GENERAL WITH DREAMS OF CRASHING THE ELECTIONS HERE.
MADE A NAME FOR HIMSELF BY ALLYING WITH HYDRA WHILE THEY CONTROLLED THE U.S.

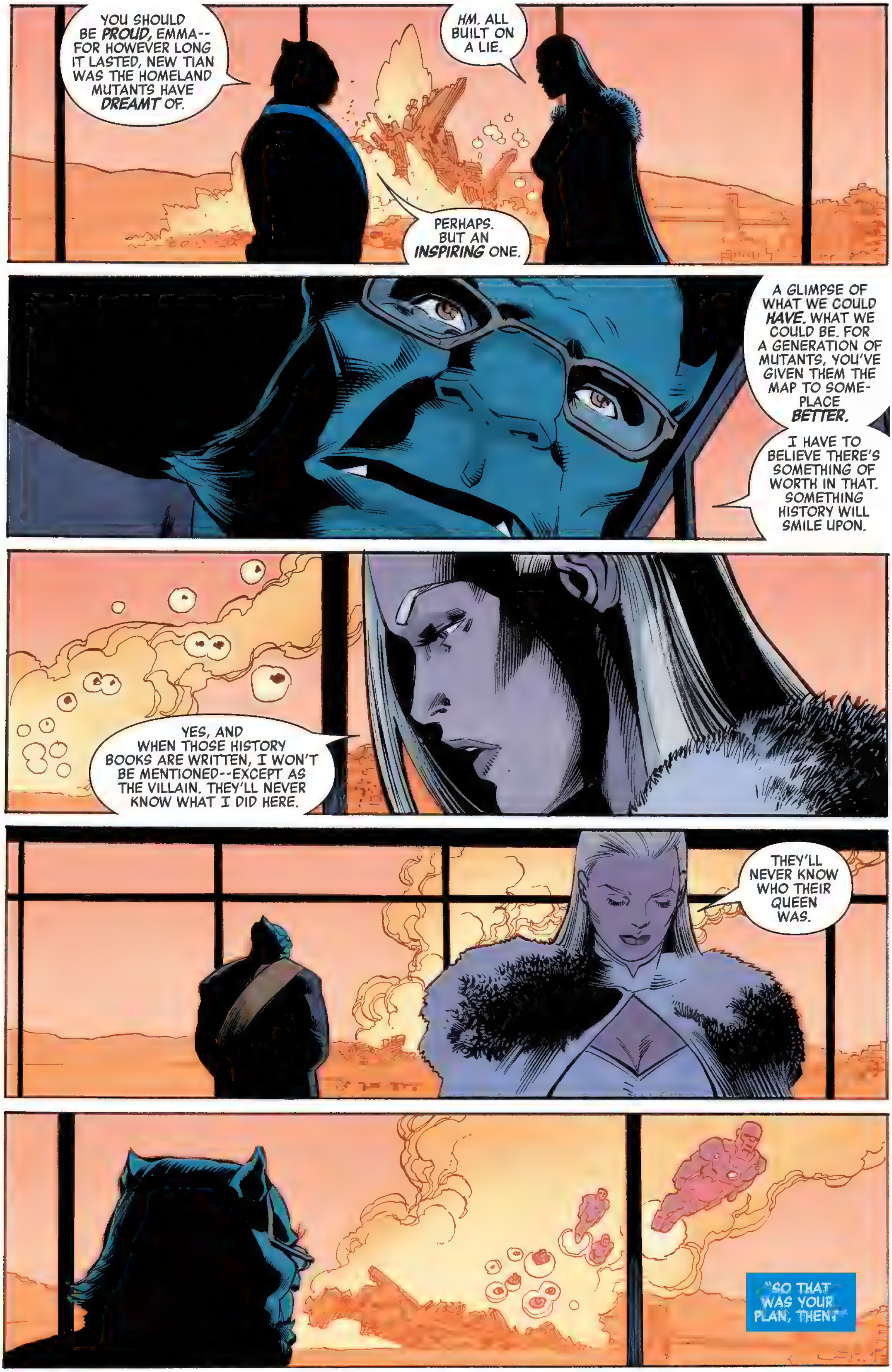

BAD BET.
AND AS SOON AS I SEE IT, I KNOW.
ALL THE RUMORS, ALL THE WHISPERS--THEY CHECKED OUT.
I RECOGNIZE EVERYTHING--THE SHOT, THE PLACEMENT, THE TIME.
NOBODY KNOWS THE BLACK WIDOW LIKE I DO, AFTER ALL.
I KNOW IT'S YOU, NATASHA.

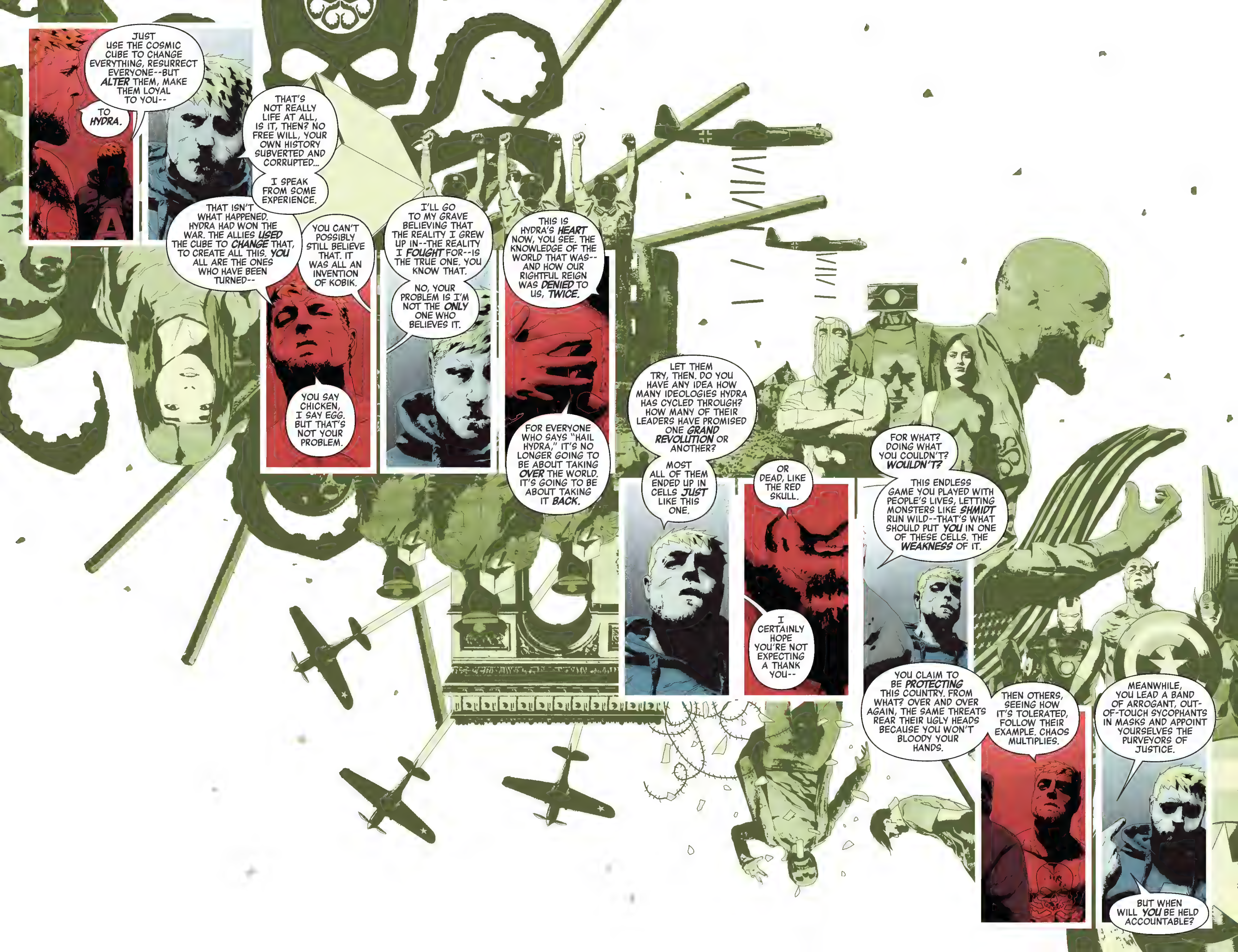

I'M SORRY FOR YOUR LOSSES. I *TRULY* AM.
YOU PROBABLY DON'T BELIEVE THIS, BUT I REALLY DIDN'T WANT ANYONE TO GET HURT.
I WENT TO RICK'S CELL, *BEGGED* HIM TO DO THE RIGHT THING. HELL, EVEN TO JUST MAKE IT *LOOK* LIKE HE WOULD DO THE RIGHT THING.
RICK WOULD NEVER--
OF *COURSE* HE WOULDN'T. HE'S LIKE ALL THE REST OF YOU--
--TOO BLINDED BY THE LIES YOUR WHOLE WORLD IS BUILT ON.
BUT THAT'S THE PROBLEM, ISN'T IT? IF YOU WANT TO BLAME SOMEONE FOR THE FACT THAT THOSE GOOD PEOPLE ARE GONE NOW--
--BLAME *YOURSELF.*
I WAS GOING TO BRING THEM *BACK. ALL* OF THEM, WITH THE CUBE. I WAS GOING TO MAKE EVERYTHING *RIGHT.*
I EVEN SAW IT, FOR A MOMENT--THE *TRUTH*--

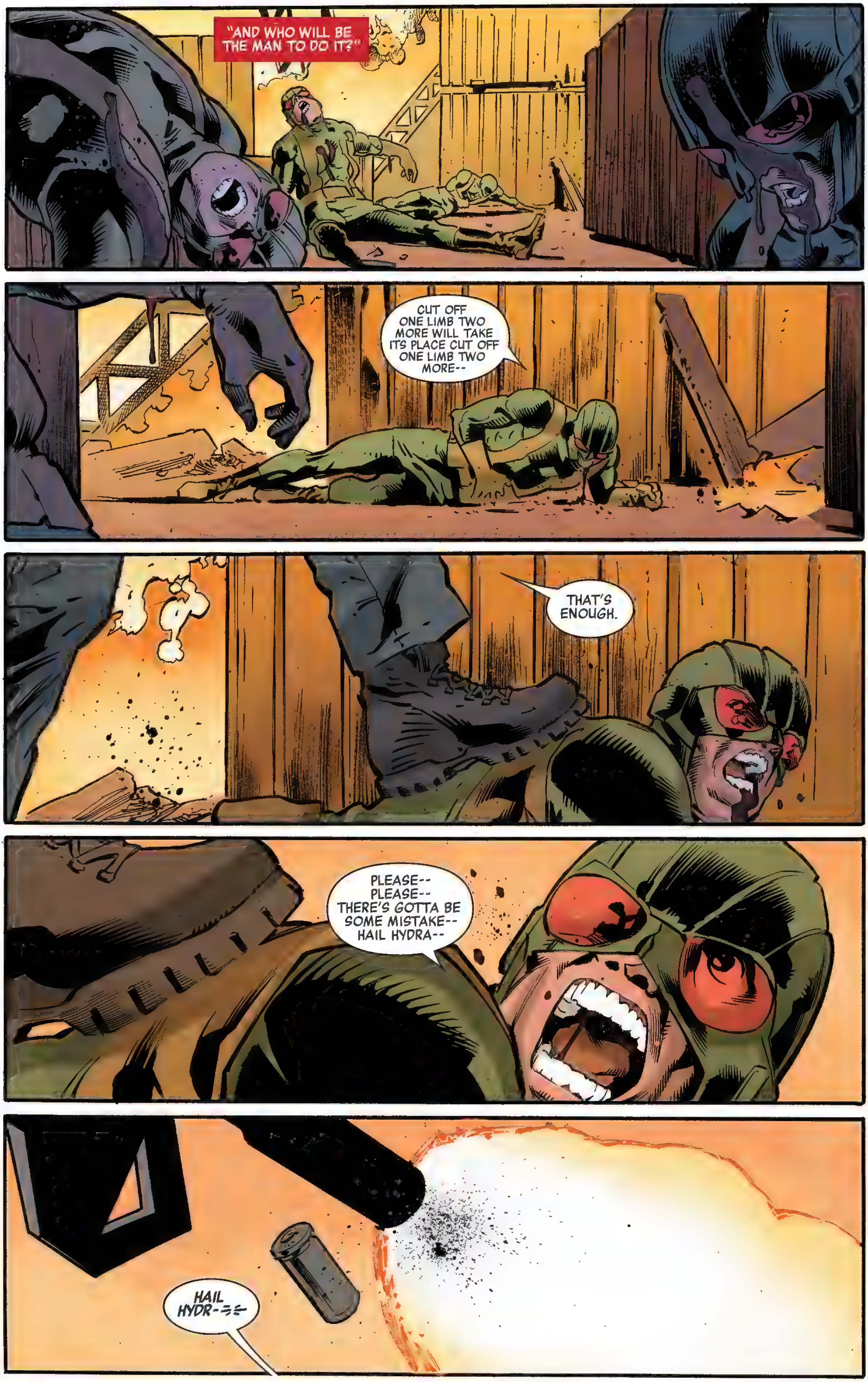

THE WORLD THAT WAS.
"RESTORED. RENEWED.
DAILY BUGLE
HYDRA ASTRONAUTS RETURN FROM SPACE WITH STRANGE POWERS
NEW YORK BULLETIN
HYDRA ASSEMBLES THE AVENGERS
DAILY BUGLE
HYDRA'S GENETICALLY ALTERED SPIDERS YIELD SUPER-POWERED RESULTS
NEW YORK BULLETIN
MUTANT REVOLUTIONARIES EXECUTED BY STATE
"IT WAS BEAUTIFUL.
"AND I KNOW YOU THINK IT ONLY LASTED A MOMENT. BUT ONCE IT'S REVEALED ITSELF, I THINK YOU'LL FIND--
--IT'S NOT SO EASY TO PUT EVERYTHING BACK WHERE IT WAS.

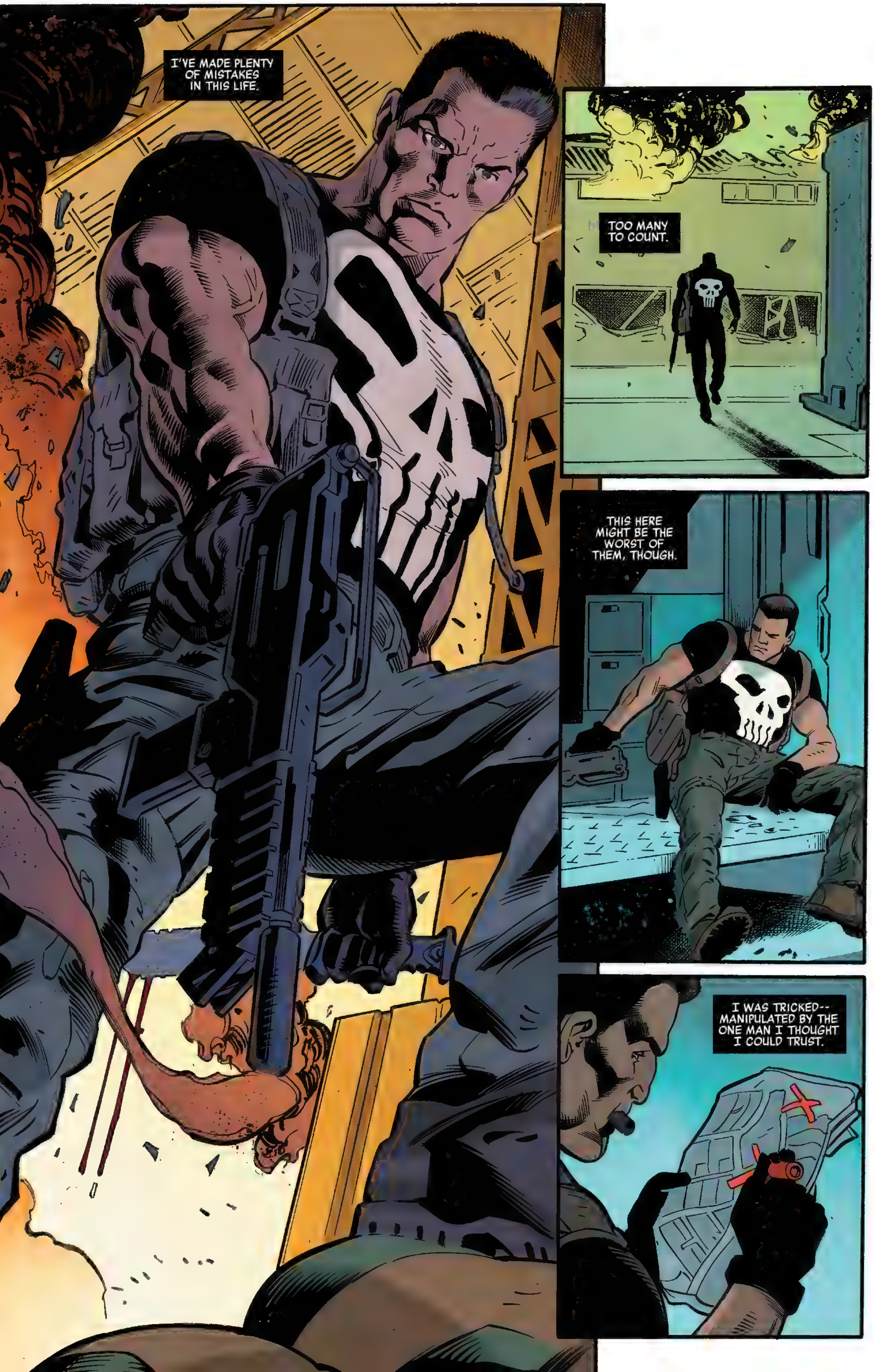

NEW TIAN.
ATTENTION, ALL CITIZENS OF NEW TIAN--THIS IS THE UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES.
WE URGE YOU TO PLEASE REMAIN INDOORS, AS PLANNED DEMOLITIONS OCCUR.
REMEMBER, ANY INTERFERENCE IN TODAY'S OPERATIONS WILL BE CONSIDERED A HOSTILE ACTION--
--AND PERPETRATORS WILL BE DEEMED ENEMY COMBATANTS.

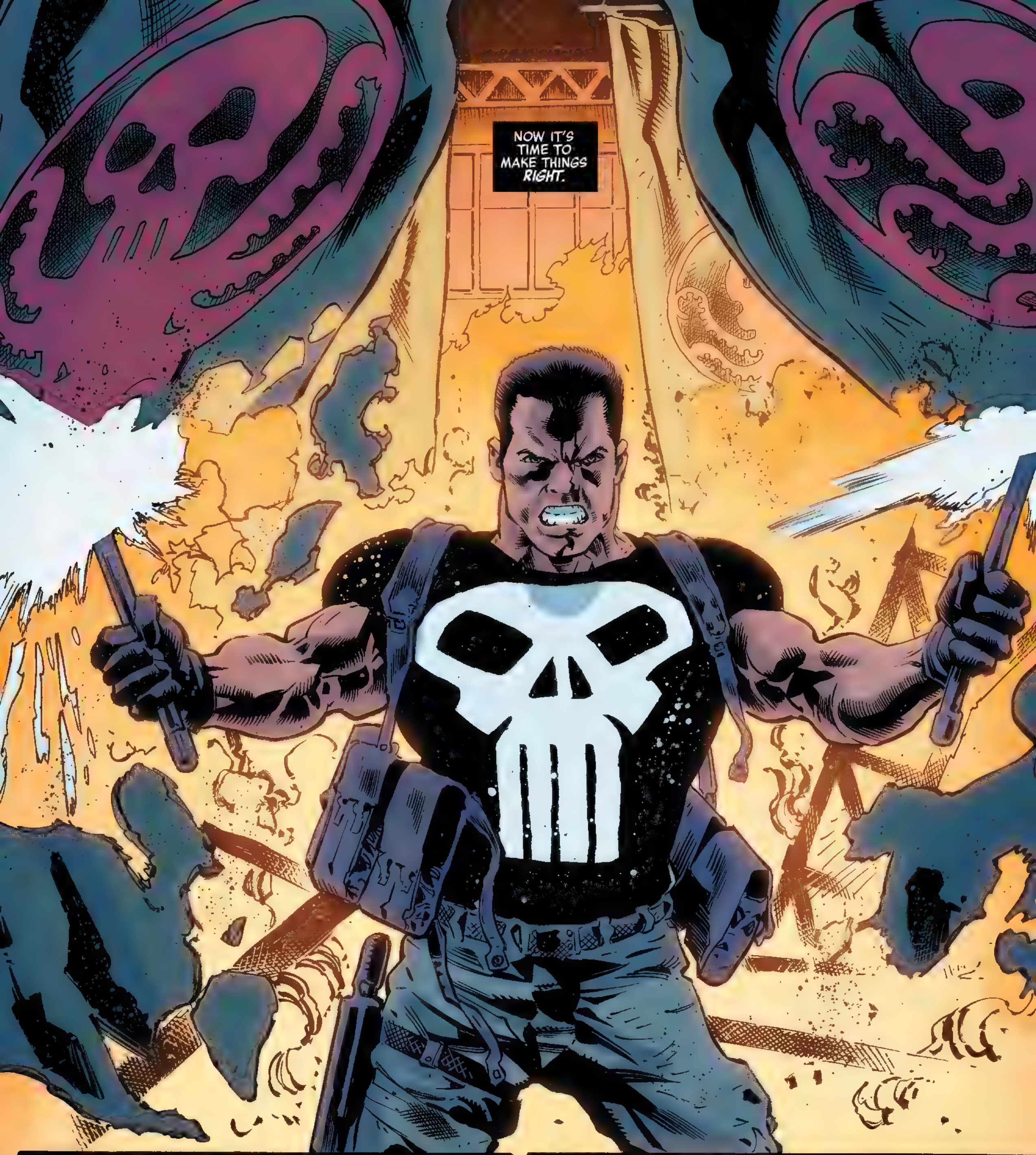

I TOLD THEM SENTINELS WERE IN POOR TASTE, BUT THEY INSISTED...
..."SECURITY CONCERNS."
HANK.
STILL AMBASSADOR McCOY FOR NOW, EMMA. NEW TIAN'S "NEGOTIATED SURRENDER" IS NOT YET COMPLETE.
SO YOU'RE SAYING THERE'S STILL TIME TO DECLARE WAR.
GIVEN THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT IS BACK TO FULL STRENGTH-- AND ALL OF THE AVENGERS HAVE RETURNED FROM SPACE OR WHAT HAVE YOU, EVEN WITH S.H.I.E.L.D. DISSOLVED...
YOU DON'T LIKE THE ODDS. IT'S FUNNY--
--I TOLD STEVE ROGERS NO MUTANT WOULD KNEEL. CLEARLY I ONLY MEANT TO HYDRA.
THE WORLD IS CELEBRATING. THEY'VE DEFEATED AND OVERTHROWN FASCIST RULE. THEY DON'T SEEM TO UNDERSTAND--
--THAT MUTANTS ALWAYS LIVE UNDER IT.
NOT ALWAYS.

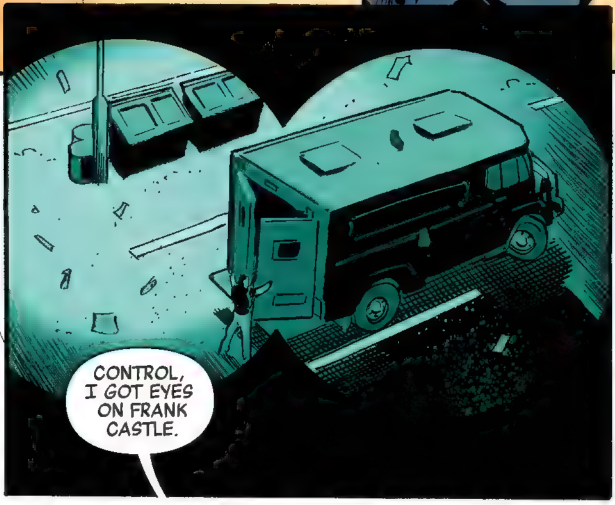

YOU SHOULD BE *PROUD*, EMMA--FOR HOWEVER LONG IT LASTED, NEW TIAN WAS THE HOMELAND MUTANTS HAVE *DREAMT* OF.
*HM.* ALL BUILT ON A LIE.
PERHAPS. BUT AN *INSPIRING* ONE.
A GLIMPSE OF WHAT WE COULD *HAVE*. WHAT WE COULD BE. FOR A GENERATION OF MUTANTS, YOU'VE GIVEN THEM THE MAP TO SOMEPLACE *BETTER*.
I HAVE TO BELIEVE THERE'S SOMETHING OF WORTH IN THAT. SOMETHING HISTORY WILL SMILE UPON.
YES, AND WHEN THOSE HISTORY BOOKS ARE WRITTEN, I WON'T BE MENTIONED--EXCEPT AS THE VILLAIN. THEY'LL NEVER KNOW WHAT I DID HERE.
THEY'LL NEVER KNOW WHO THEIR QUEEN WAS.
"SO THAT WAS YOUR PLAN, THEN?"

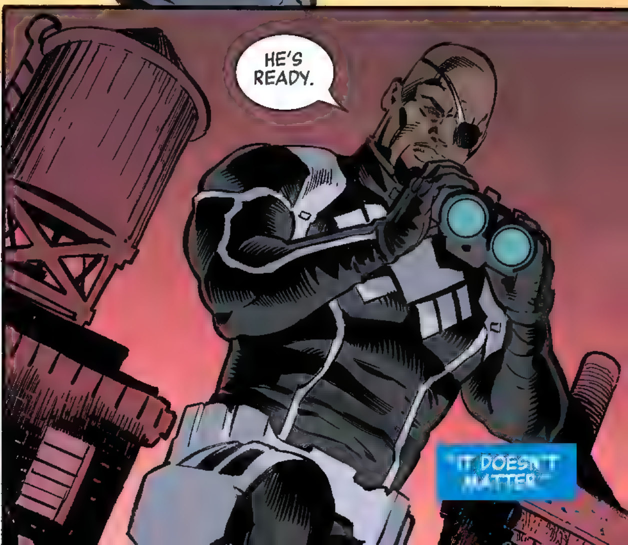

JUST USE THE COSMIC CUBE TO CHANGE EVERYTHING, RESURRECT EVERYONE--BUT **ALTER** THEM, MAKE THEM LOYAL TO YOU--
TO **HYDRA.**
THAT'S NOT REALLY LIFE AT ALL, IS IT, THEN? NO FREE WILL, YOUR OWN HISTORY SUBVERTED AND CORRUPTED...
I SPEAK FROM SOME EXPERIENCE.
THAT ISN'T WHAT HAPPENED. HYDRA HAD WON THE WAR. THE ALLIES **USED** THE CUBE TO **CHANGE** THAT, TO CREATE ALL THIS. **YOU** ALL ARE THE ONES WHO HAVE BEEN TURNED--
YOU CAN'T POSSIBLY STILL BELIEVE THAT. IT WAS ALL AN INVENTION OF KOBIK.
YOU SAY CHICKEN, I SAY EGG. BUT THAT'S NOT YOUR PROBLEM.
I'LL GO TO MY GRAVE BELIEVING THAT THE REALITY I GREW UP IN--THE REALITY I **FOUGHT** FOR--IS THE TRUE ONE. YOU KNOW THAT.
NO, YOUR PROBLEM IS I'M NOT THE **ONLY** ONE WHO BELIEVES IT.
THIS IS HYDRA'S **HEART** NOW, YOU SEE. THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORLD THAT WAS--AND HOW OUR RIGHTFUL REIGN WAS **DENIED** TO US, **TWICE.**
FOR EVERYONE WHO SAYS "HAIL HYDRA," IT'S NO LONGER GOING TO BE ABOUT TAKING **OVER** THE WORLD. IT'S GOING TO BE ABOUT TAKING IT **BACK.**
LET THEM TRY, THEN. DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW MANY IDEOLOGIES HYDRA HAS CYCLED THROUGH? HOW MANY OF THEIR LEADERS HAVE PROMISED ONE **GRAND REVOLUTION** OR ANOTHER?
MOST ALL OF THEM ENDED UP IN CELLS **JUST** LIKE THIS ONE.
OR DEAD, LIKE THE RED SKULL.
I CERTAINLY HOPE YOU'RE NOT EXPECTING A THANK YOU--
FOR WHAT? DOING WHAT YOU COULDN'T? **WOULDN'T?**
THIS ENDLESS GAME YOU PLAYED WITH PEOPLE'S LIVES, LETTING MONSTERS LIKE **SHMIDT** RUN WILD--THAT'S WHAT SHOULD PUT **YOU** IN ONE OF THESE CELLS. THE **WEAKNESS** OF IT.
YOU CLAIM TO BE **PROTECTING** THIS COUNTRY. FROM WHAT? OVER AND OVER AGAIN, THE SAME THREATS REAR THEIR UGLY HEADS BECAUSE YOU WON'T BLOODY YOUR HANDS.
THEN OTHERS, SEEING HOW IT'S TOLERATED, FOLLOW THEIR EXAMPLE. CHAOS MULTIPLIES.
MEANWHILE, YOU LEAD A BAND OF ARROGANT, OUT-OF-TOUCH SYCOPHANTS IN MASKS AND APPOINT YOURSELVES THE PURVEYORS OF JUSTICE.
BUT WHEN WILL **YOU** BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE?

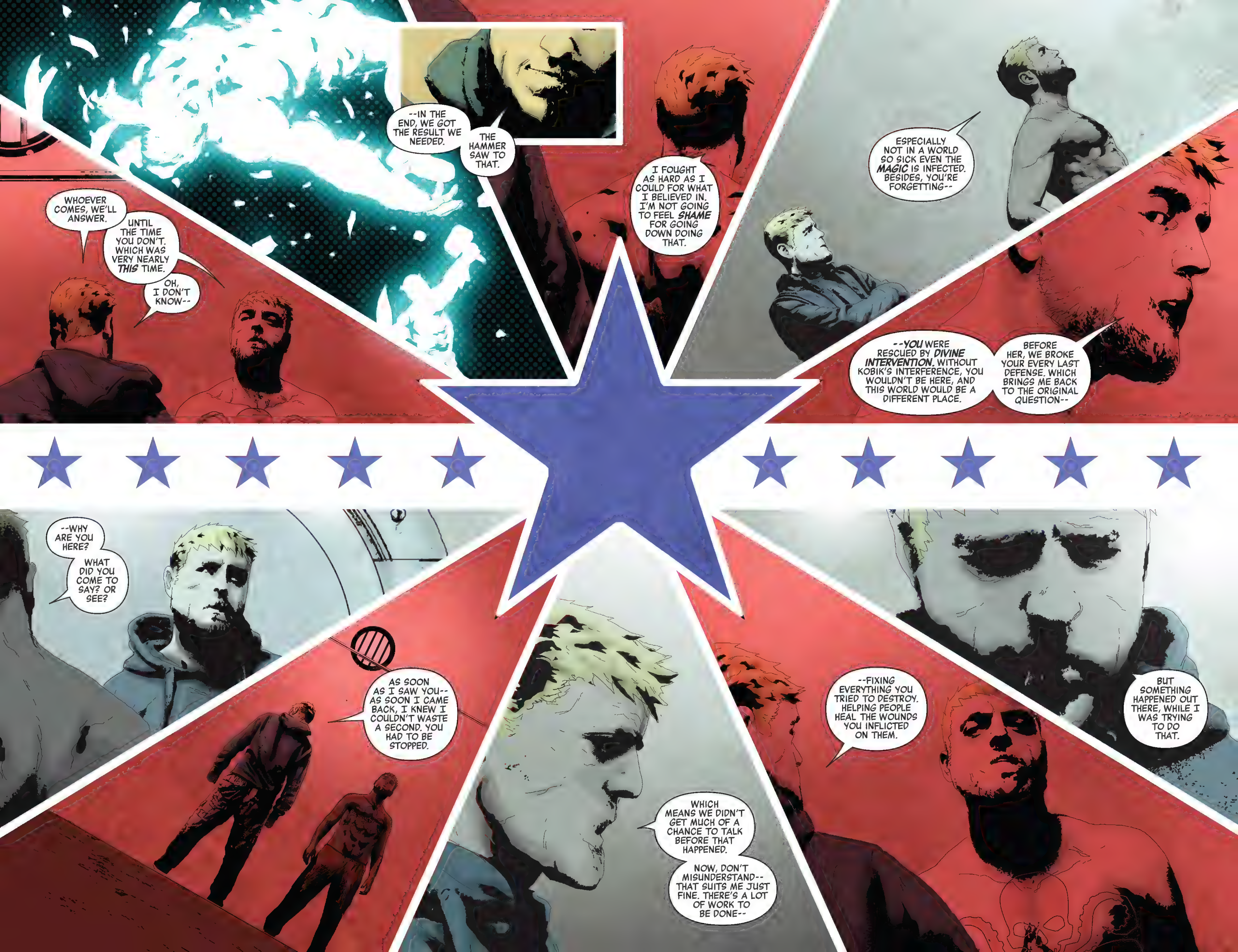

"AND WHO WILL BE THE MAN TO DO IT?"
CUT OFF ONE LIMB TWO MORE WILL TAKE ITS PLACE CUT OFF ONE LIMB TWO MORE--
THAT'S ENOUGH.
PLEASE-- PLEASE-- THERE'S GOTTA BE SOME MISTAKE-- HAIL HYDRA--
HAIL HYDR--

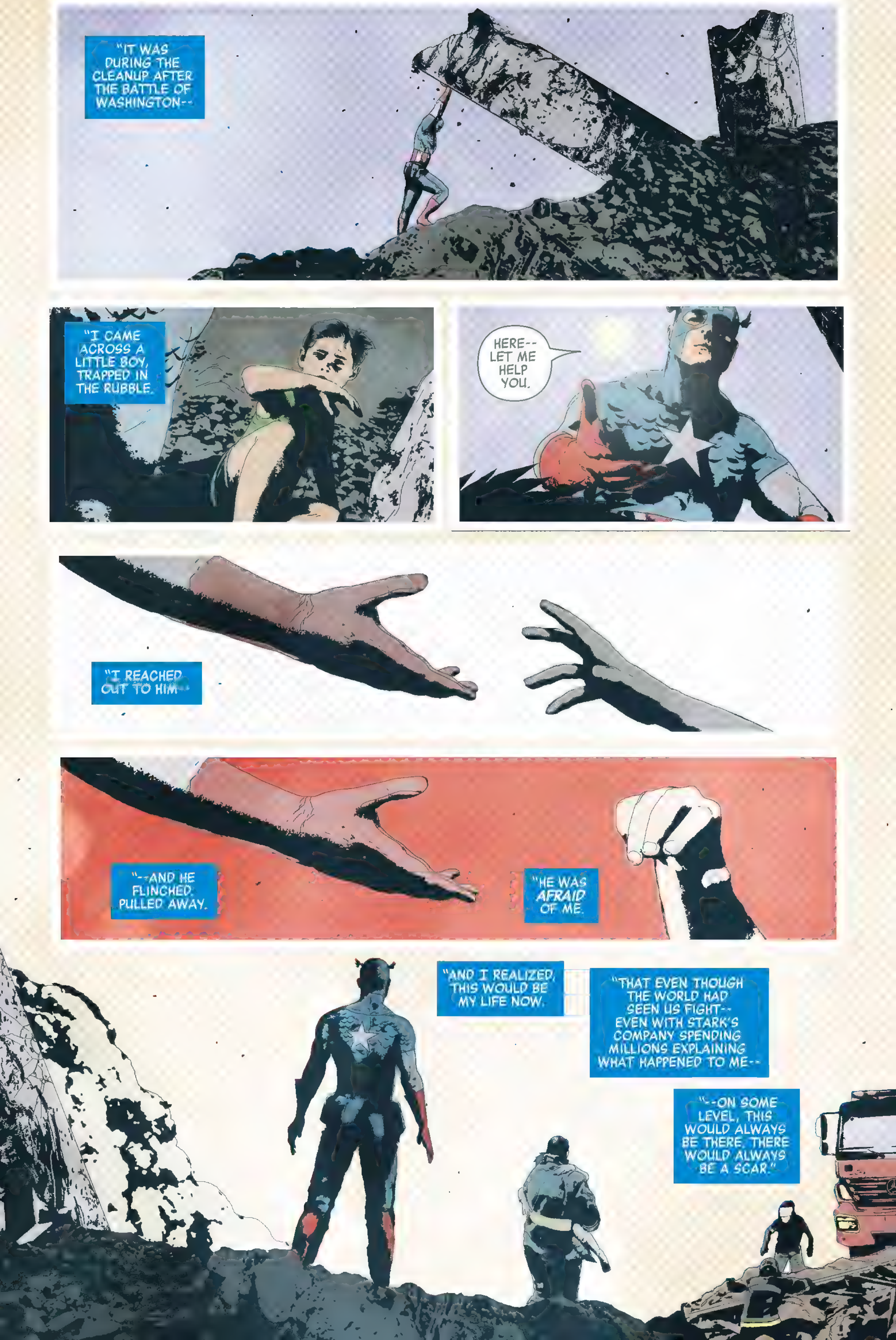

I'VE MADE PLENTY OF MISTAKES IN THIS LIFE.
TOO MANY TO COUNT.
THIS HERE MIGHT BE THE WORST OF THEM, THOUGH.
I WAS TRICKED-- MANIPULATED BY THE ONE MAN I THOUGHT I COULD TRUST.

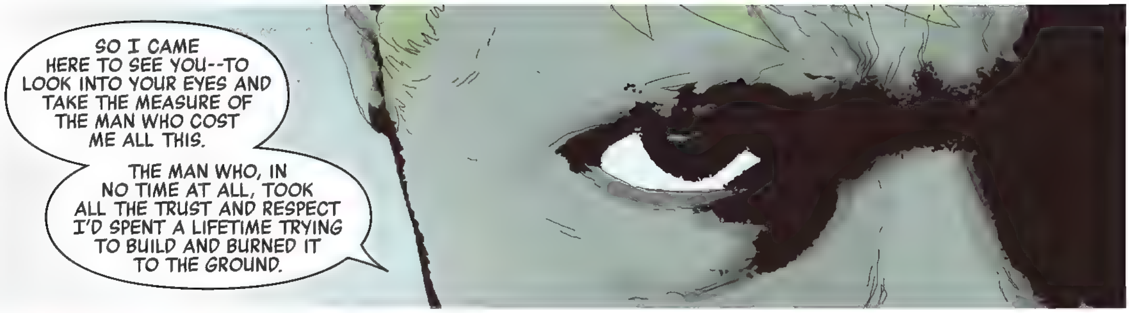

NOW IT'S TIME TO MAKE THINGS *RIGHT*.

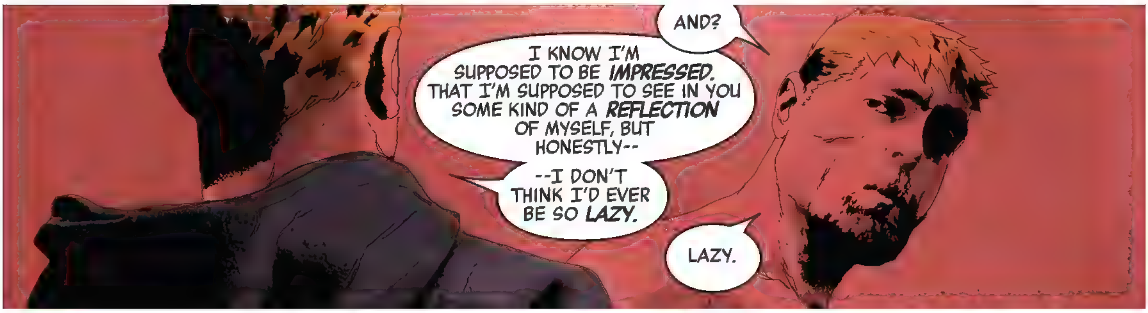

CONTROL, I GOT EYES ON FRANK CASTLE.

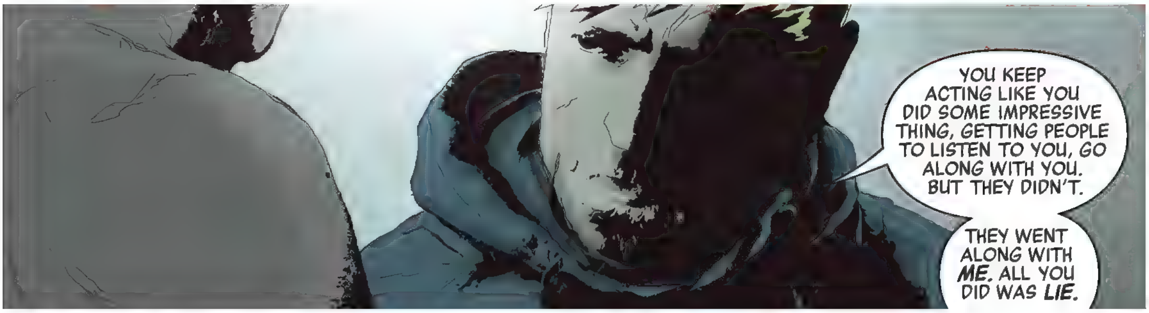

HE'S READY.
"IT DOESN'T MATTER"

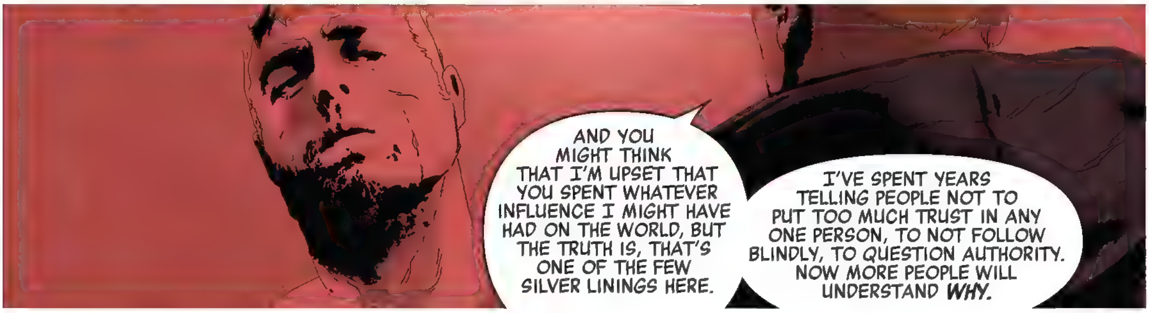

WHOEVER COMES, WE'LL ANSWER.
UNTIL THE TIME YOU DON'T. WHICH WAS VERY NEARLY *THIS* TIME.
OH, I DON'T KNOW--
--IN THE END, WE GOT THE RESULT WE NEEDED.
THE HAMMER SAW TO THAT.
I FOUGHT AS HARD AS I COULD FOR WHAT I BELIEVED IN. I'M NOT GOING TO FEEL *SHAME* FOR GOING DOWN DOING THAT.
ESPECIALLY NOT IN A WORLD SO SICK EVEN THE *MAGIC* IS INFECTED. BESIDES, YOU'RE FORGETTING--
*--YOU* WERE RESCUED BY *DIVINE INTERVENTION.* WITHOUT KOBIK'S INTERFERENCE, YOU WOULDN'T BE HERE, AND THIS WORLD WOULD BE A DIFFERENT PLACE.
BEFORE HER, WE BROKE YOUR EVERY LAST DEFENSE. WHICH BRINGS ME BACK TO THE ORIGINAL QUESTION--
--WHY ARE YOU HERE?
WHAT DID YOU COME TO SAY? OR SEE?
AS SOON AS I SAW YOU--AS SOON I CAME BACK, I KNEW I COULDN'T WASTE A SECOND. YOU HAD TO BE STOPPED.
WHICH MEANS WE DIDN'T GET MUCH OF A CHANCE TO TALK BEFORE THAT HAPPENED.
NOW, DON'T MISUNDERSTAND--THAT SUITS ME JUST FINE. THERE'S A LOT OF WORK TO BE DONE--
--FIXING EVERYTHING YOU TRIED TO DESTROY. HELPING PEOPLE HEAL THE WOUNDS YOU INFLICTED ON THEM.
BUT SOMETHING HAPPENED OUT THERE, WHILE I WAS TRYING TO DO THAT.

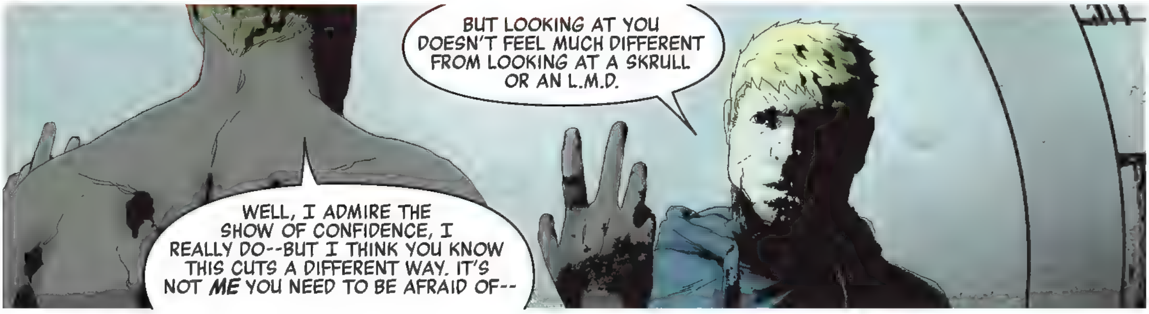

"IT WAS DURING THE CLEANUP AFTER THE BATTLE OF WASHINGTON--
"I CAME ACROSS A LITTLE BOY, TRAPPED IN THE RUBBLE.
HERE-- LET ME HELP YOU.
"I REACHED OUT TO HIM--
"--AND HE FLINCHED. PULLED AWAY.
"HE WAS *AFRAID* OF ME.
"AND I REALIZED, THIS WOULD BE MY LIFE NOW.
"THAT EVEN THOUGH THE WORLD HAD SEEN US FIGHT-- EVEN WITH STARK'S COMPANY SPENDING MILLIONS EXPLAINING WHAT HAPPENED TO ME--
"--ON SOME LEVEL, THIS WOULD ALWAYS BE THERE. THERE WOULD ALWAYS BE A SCAR."

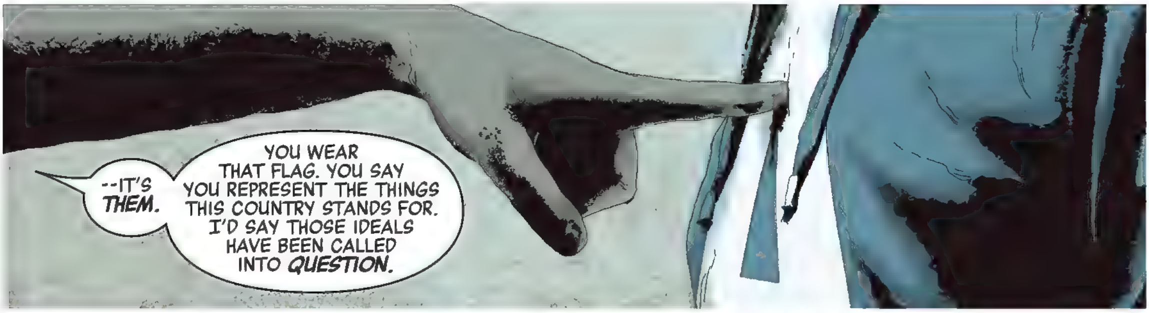

SO I CAME HERE TO SEE YOU--TO LOOK INTO YOUR EYES AND TAKE THE MEASURE OF THE MAN WHO COST ME ALL THIS.
THE MAN WHO, IN NO TIME AT ALL, TOOK ALL THE TRUST AND RESPECT I'D SPENT A LIFETIME TRYING TO BUILD AND BURNED IT TO THE GROUND.

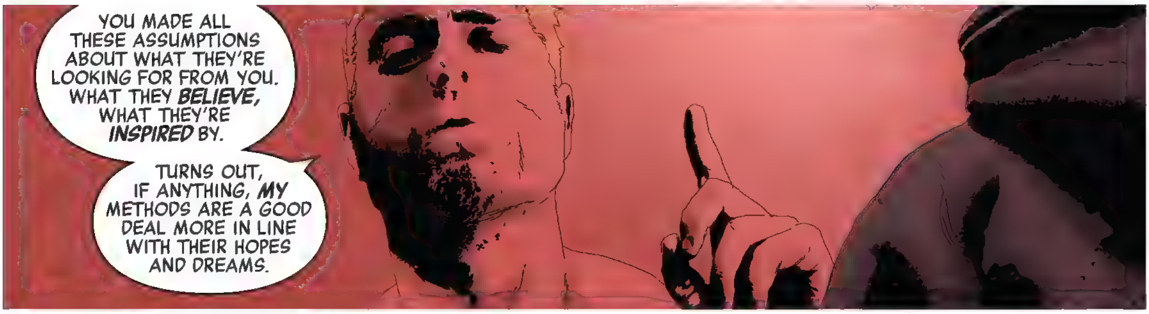

AND?
I KNOW I'M SUPPOSED TO BE *IMPRESSED.* THAT I'M SUPPOSED TO SEE IN YOU SOME KIND OF A *REFLECTION* OF MYSELF, BUT HONESTLY--
--I DON'T THINK I'D EVER BE SO *LAZY.*
LAZY.

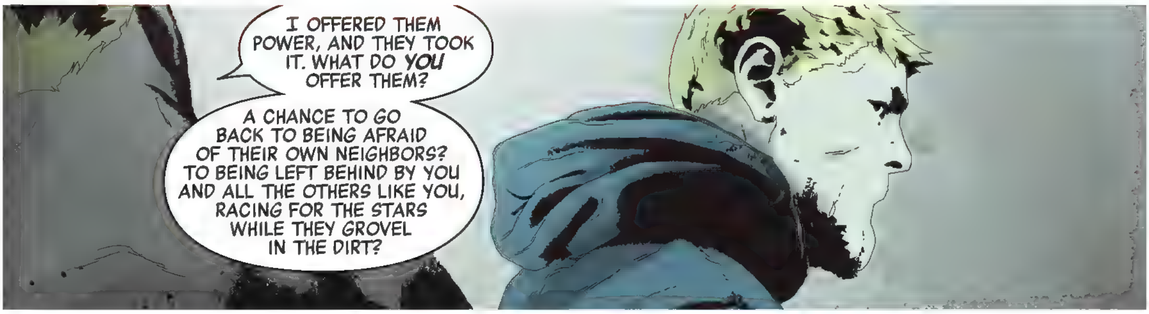

YOU KEEP ACTING LIKE YOU DID SOME IMPRESSIVE THING, GETTING PEOPLE TO LISTEN TO YOU, GO ALONG WITH YOU. BUT THEY DIDN'T.
THEY WENT ALONG WITH *ME.* ALL YOU DID WAS *LIE.*

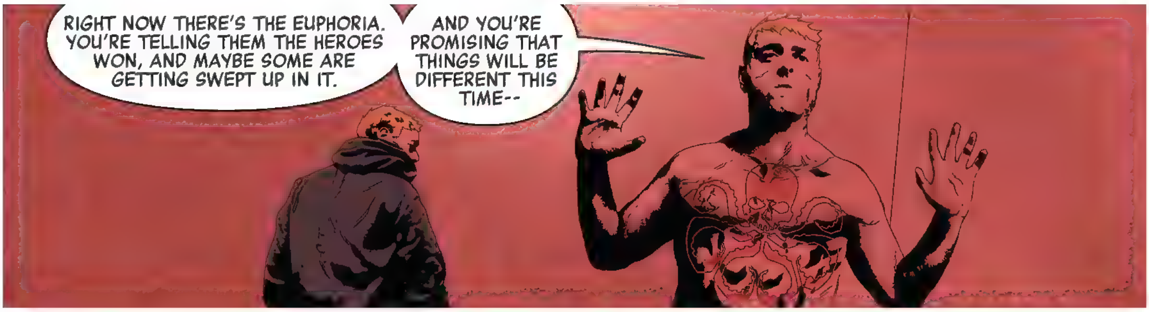

AND YOU MIGHT THINK THAT I'M UPSET THAT YOU SPENT WHATEVER INFLUENCE I MIGHT HAVE HAD ON THE WORLD, BUT THE TRUTH IS, THAT'S ONE OF THE FEW SILVER LININGS HERE.
I'VE SPENT YEARS TELLING PEOPLE NOT TO PUT TOO MUCH TRUST IN ANY ONE PERSON, TO NOT FOLLOW BLINDLY, TO QUESTION AUTHORITY. NOW MORE PEOPLE WILL UNDERSTAND *WHY.*

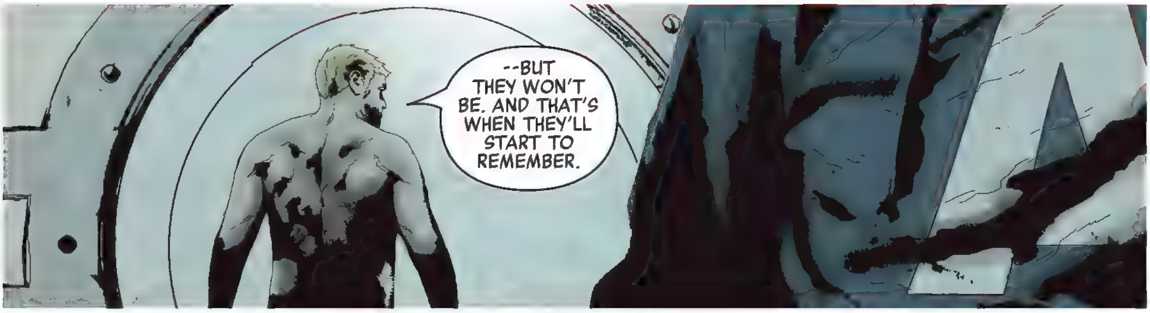

BUT LOOKING AT YOU DOESN'T FEEL MUCH DIFFERENT FROM LOOKING AT A SKRULL OR AN L.M.D.
WELL, I ADMIRE THE SHOW OF CONFIDENCE, I REALLY DO--BUT I THINK YOU KNOW THIS CUTS A DIFFERENT WAY. IT'S NOT *ME* YOU NEED TO BE AFRAID OF--

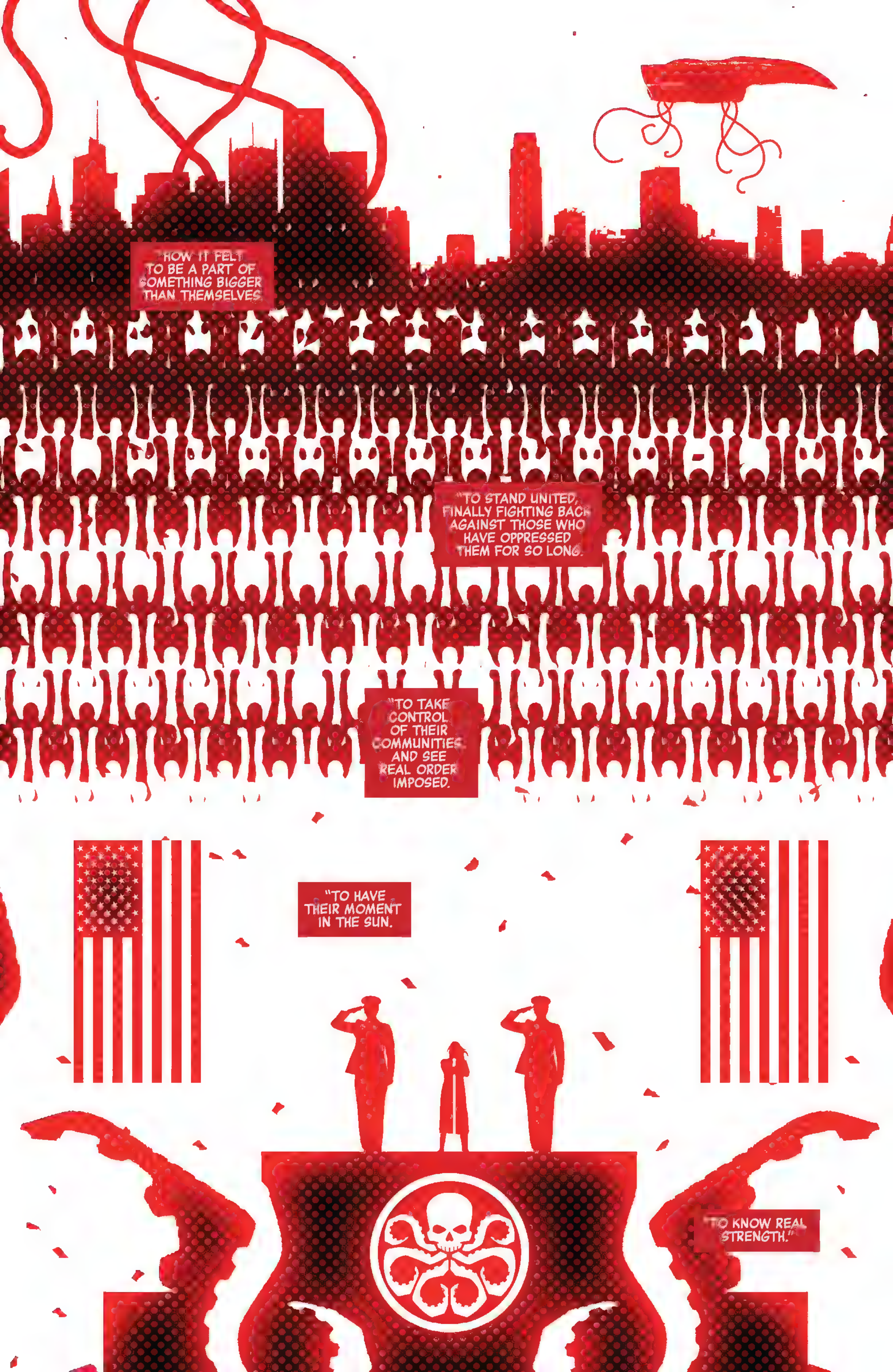

--IT'S **THEM.**
YOU WEAR THAT FLAG. YOU SAY YOU REPRESENT THE THINGS THIS COUNTRY STANDS FOR. I'D SAY THOSE IDEALS HAVE BEEN CALLED INTO ***QUESTION.***

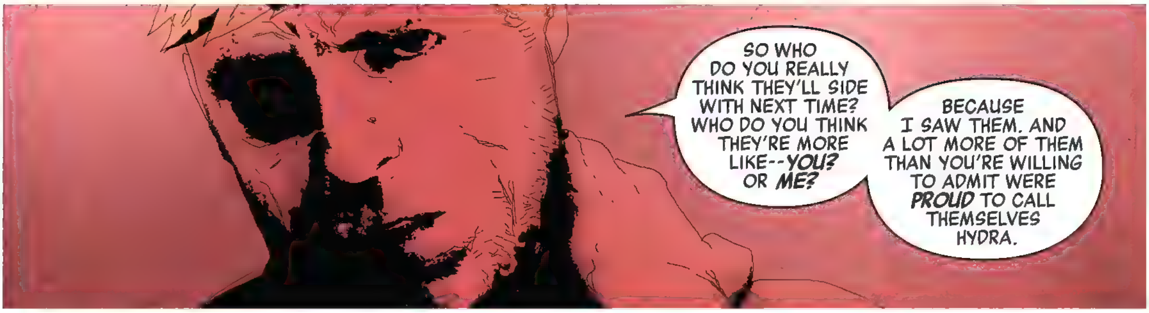

YOU MADE ALL THESE ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT WHAT THEY'RE LOOKING FOR FROM YOU. WHAT THEY ***BELIEVE,*** WHAT THEY'RE ***INSPIRED*** BY.
TURNS OUT, IF ANYTHING, ***MY*** METHODS ARE A GOOD DEAL MORE IN LINE WITH THEIR HOPES AND DREAMS.

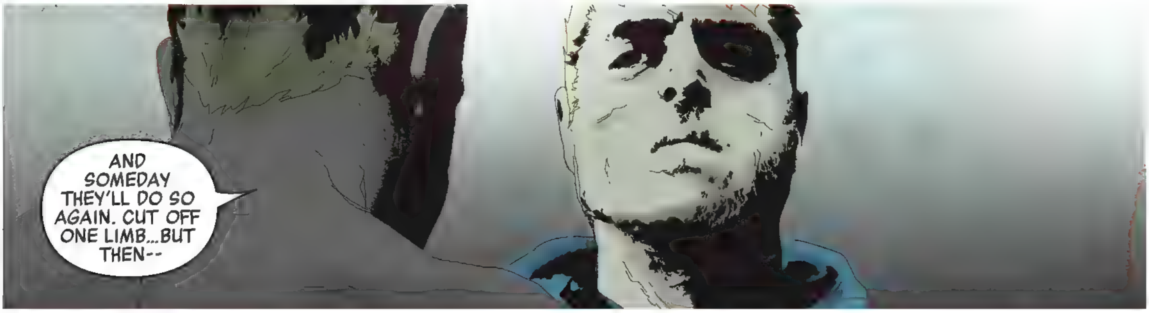

I OFFERED THEM POWER, AND THEY TOOK IT. WHAT DO ***YOU*** OFFER THEM?
A CHANCE TO GO BACK TO BEING AFRAID OF THEIR OWN NEIGHBORS? TO BEING LEFT BEHIND BY YOU AND ALL THE OTHERS LIKE YOU, RACING FOR THE STARS WHILE THEY GROVEL IN THE DIRT?

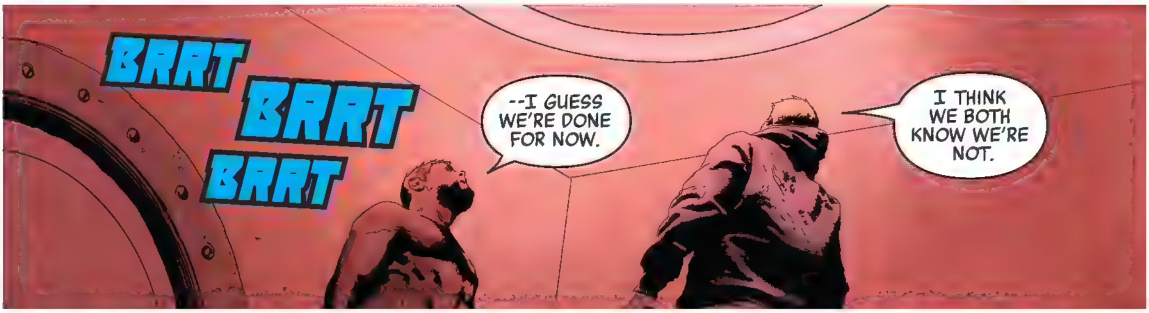

RIGHT NOW THERE'S THE EUPHORIA. YOU'RE TELLING THEM THE HEROES WON, AND MAYBE SOME ARE GETTING SWEPT UP IN IT.
AND YOU'RE PROMISING THAT THINGS WILL BE DIFFERENT THIS TIME--

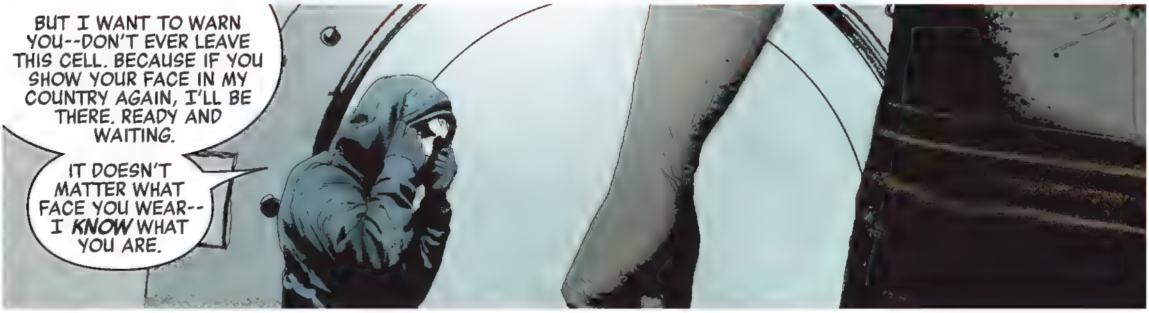

--BUT THEY WON'T BE. AND THAT'S WHEN THEY'LL START TO REMEMBER.

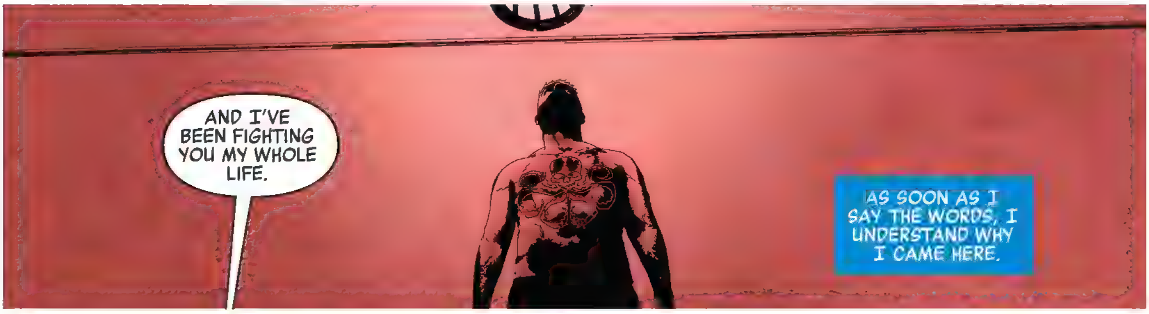

HOW IT FELT TO BE A PART OF SOMETHING BIGGER THAN THEMSELVES.
"TO STAND UNITED, FINALLY FIGHTING BACK AGAINST THOSE WHO HAVE OPPRESSED THEM FOR SO LONG.
"TO TAKE CONTROL OF THEIR COMMUNITIES AND SEE REAL ORDER IMPOSED.
"TO HAVE THEIR MOMENT IN THE SUN.
"TO KNOW REAL STRENGTH."

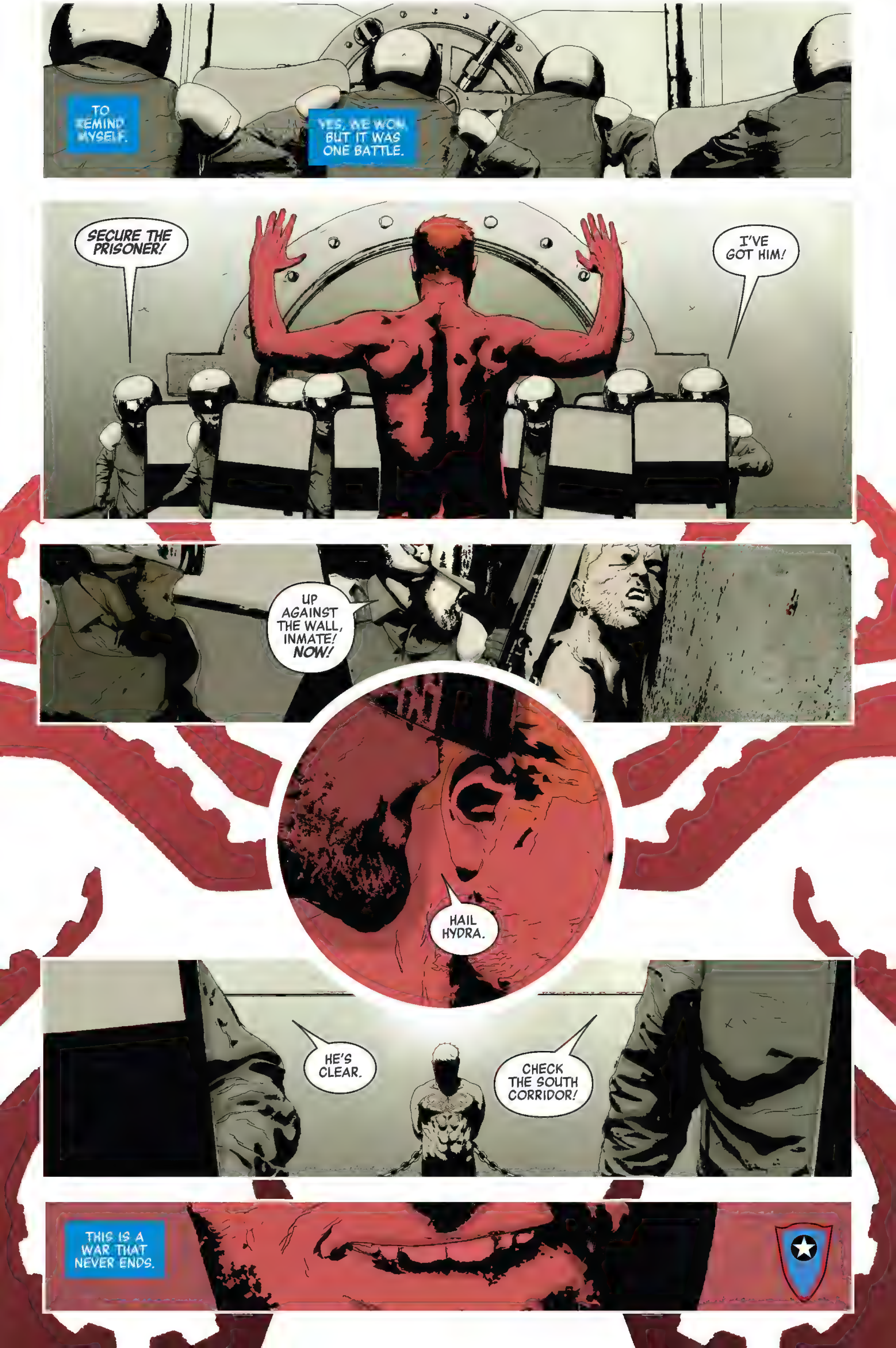

SO WHO DO YOU REALLY THINK THEY'LL SIDE WITH NEXT TIME? WHO DO YOU THINK THEY'RE MORE LIKE--***YOU?*** OR ***ME?***
BECAUSE I SAW THEM. AND A LOT MORE OF THEM THAN YOU'RE WILLING TO ADMIT WERE ***PROUD*** TO CALL THEMSELVES HYDRA.


AND SOMEDAY THEY'LL DO SO AGAIN. CUT OFF ONE LIMB...BUT THEN--

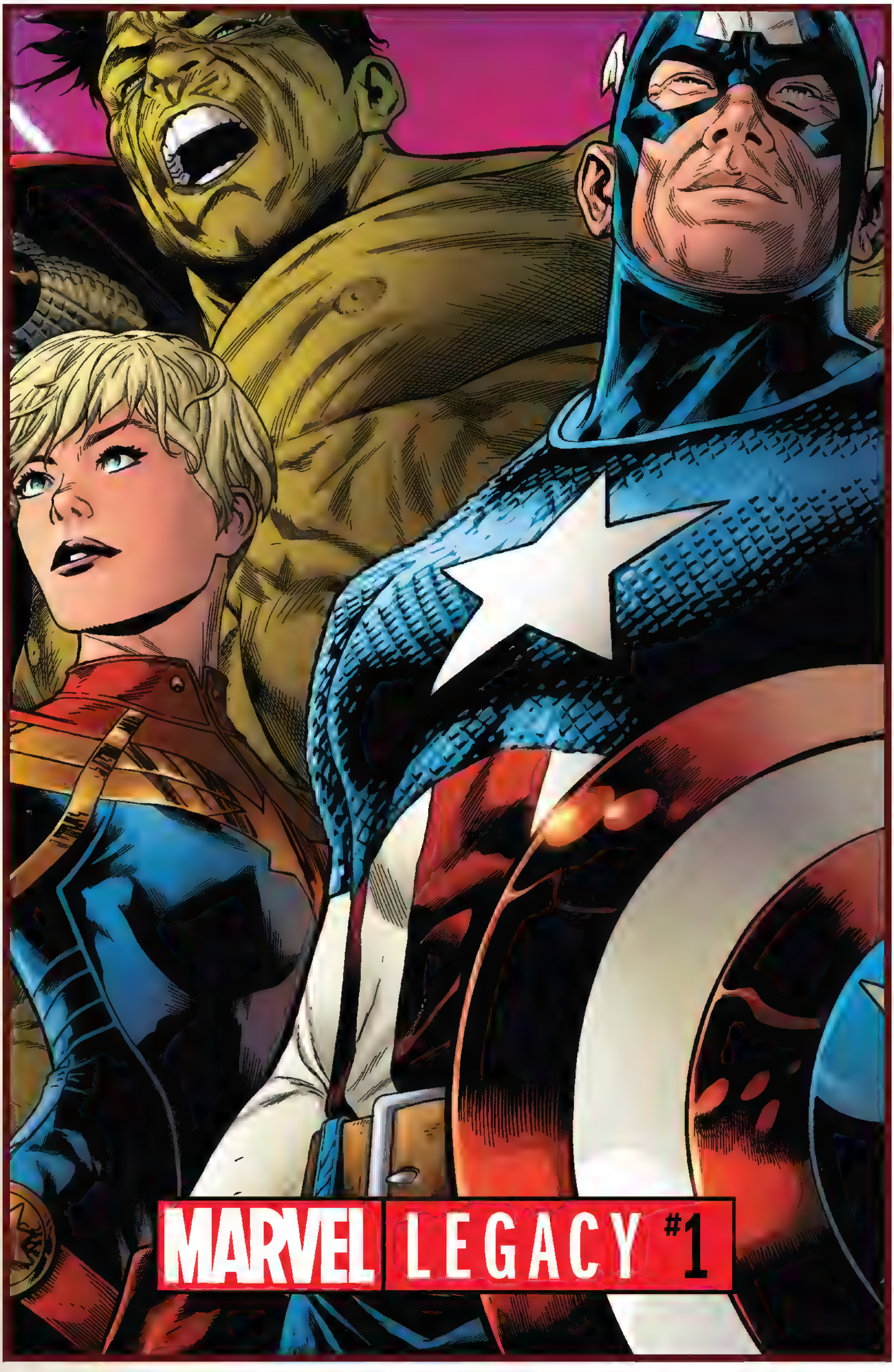

BRRT BRRT BRRT
--I GUESS WE'RE DONE FOR NOW.
I THINK WE BOTH KNOW WE'RE NOT.


BUT I WANT TO WARN YOU--DON'T EVER LEAVE THIS CELL. BECAUSE IF YOU SHOW YOUR FACE IN MY COUNTRY AGAIN, I'LL BE THERE. READY AND WAITING.
IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT FACE YOU WEAR--I ***KNOW*** WHAT YOU ARE.


AND I'VE BEEN FIGHTING YOU MY WHOLE LIFE.
AS SOON AS I SAY THE WORDS, I UNDERSTAND WHY I CAME HERE.


TO REMIND MYSELF.
YES, WE WON, BUT IT WAS ONE BATTLE.
SECURE THE PRISONER!
I'VE GOT HIM!
UP AGAINST THE WALL, INMATE! NOW!
HAIL HYDRA.
HE'S CLEAR.
CHECK THE SOUTH CORRIDOR!
THIS IS A WAR THAT NEVER ENDS.

NEXT


MARVEL LEGACY #1

ON SALE THIS MONTH!

SECRET EMPIRE #0 VARIANT
BY **ELIZABETH TORQUE**

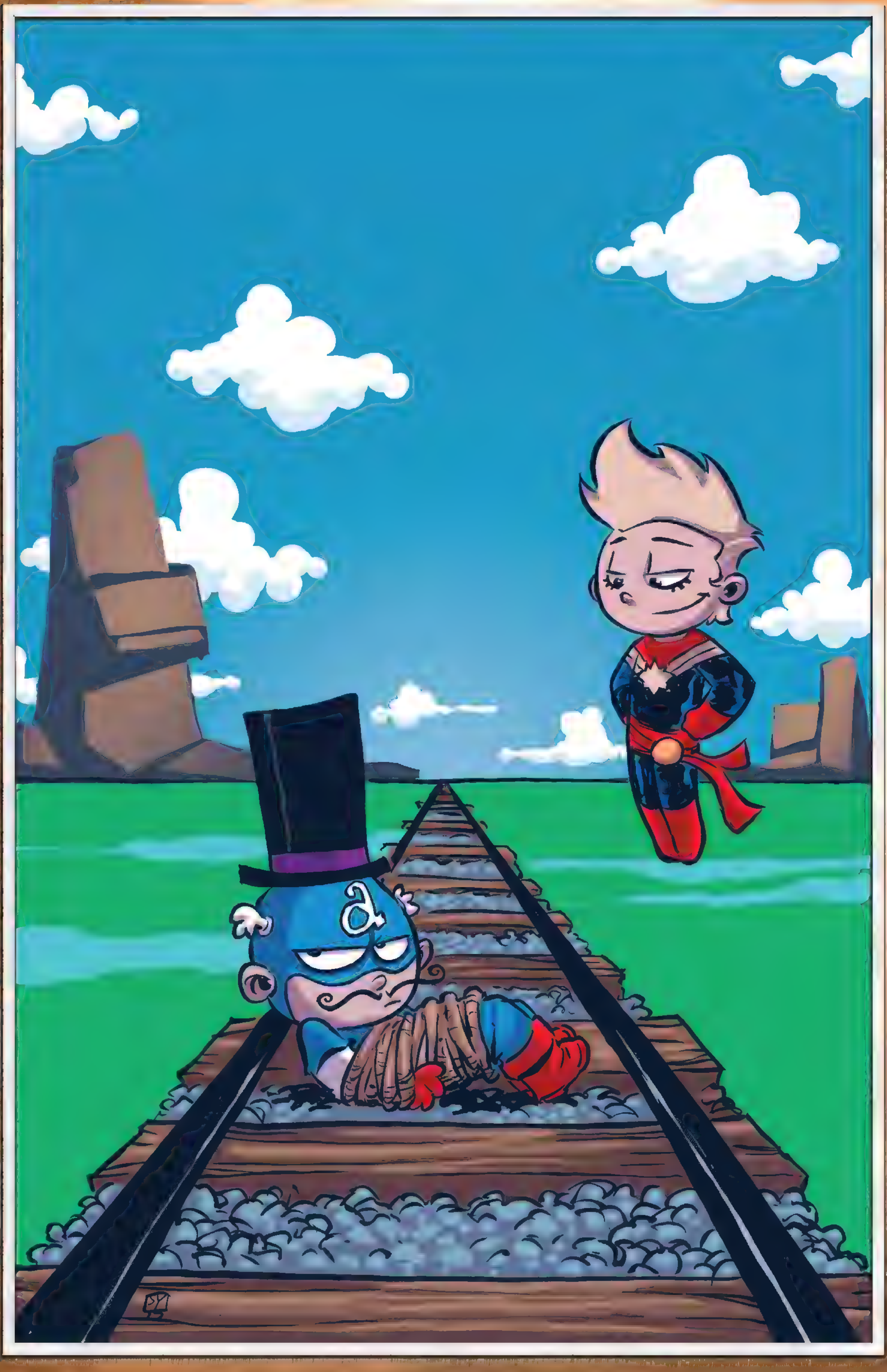
FRENZ/BREEDING

SECRET EMPIRE #0 VARIANT
BY **RON FRENZ, BRETT BREEDING**
**& WIL QUINTANA**

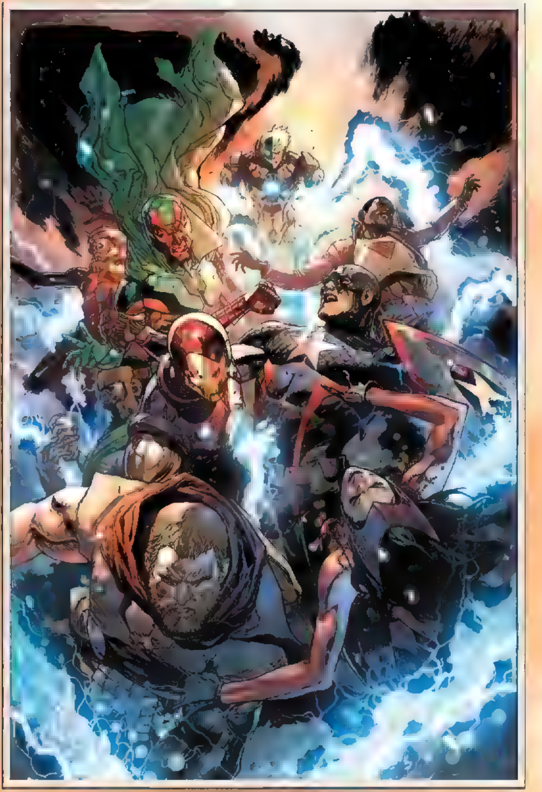
SECRET EMPIRE #0 VARIANT
BY **ROD REIS**

SECRET EMPIRE #1 VARIANT BY **ADI GRANOV**

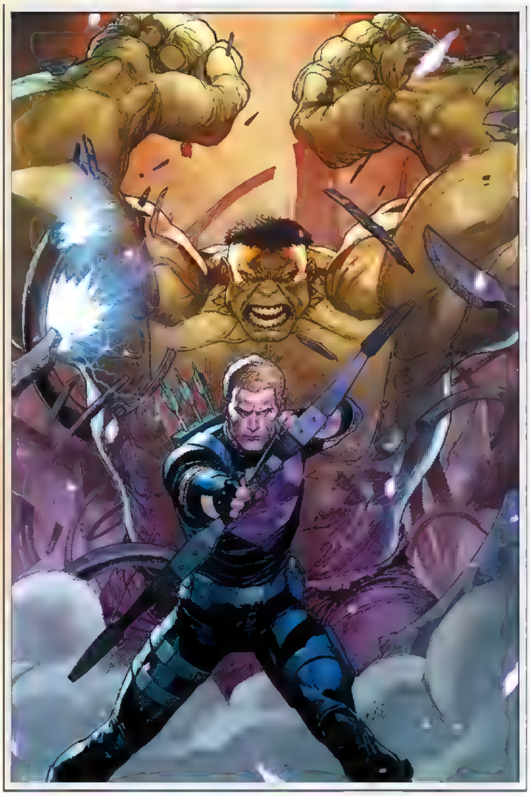
SECRET EMPIRE #1 VARIANT BY **TODD NAUCK** & **RACHELLE ROSENBERG**



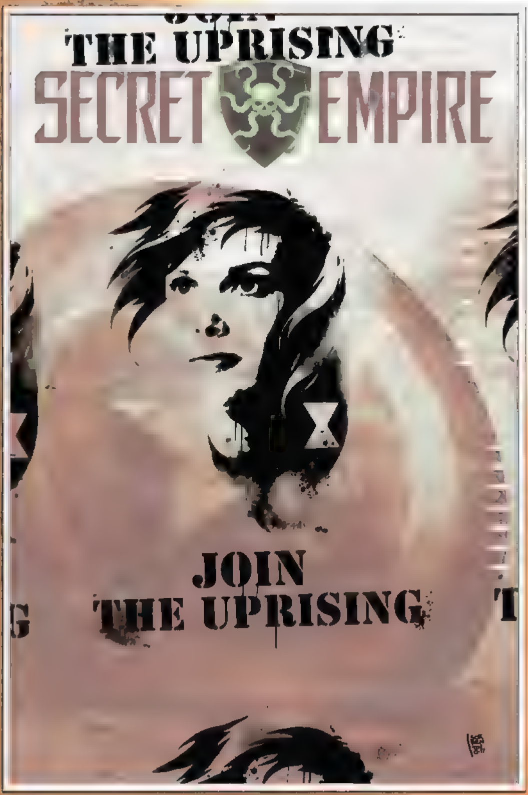
SECRET EMPIRE #1 VARIANT BY **SKOTTIE YOUNG**



SECRET EMPIRE #4 VARIANT
BY **LEINIL FRANCIS YU**
**& ROMULO FAJARDO JR.**

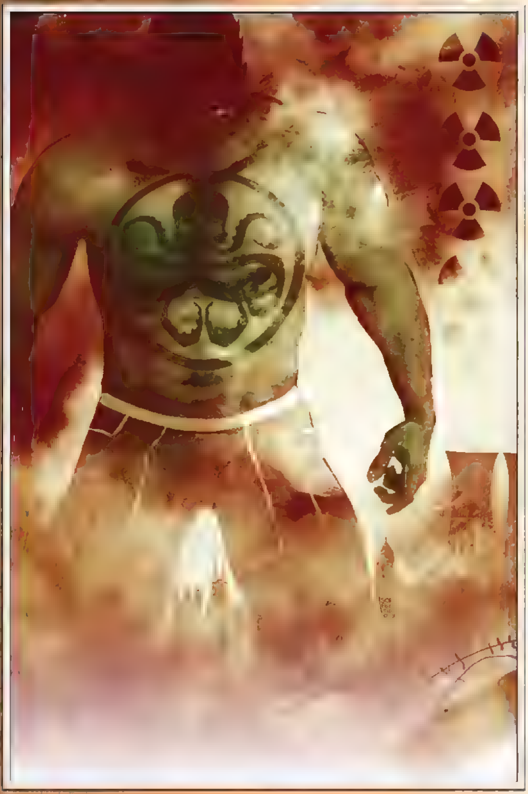


SECRET EMPIRE #6 VARIANT
BY **LEINIL FRANCIS YU**
**& ROMULO FAJARDO JR.**

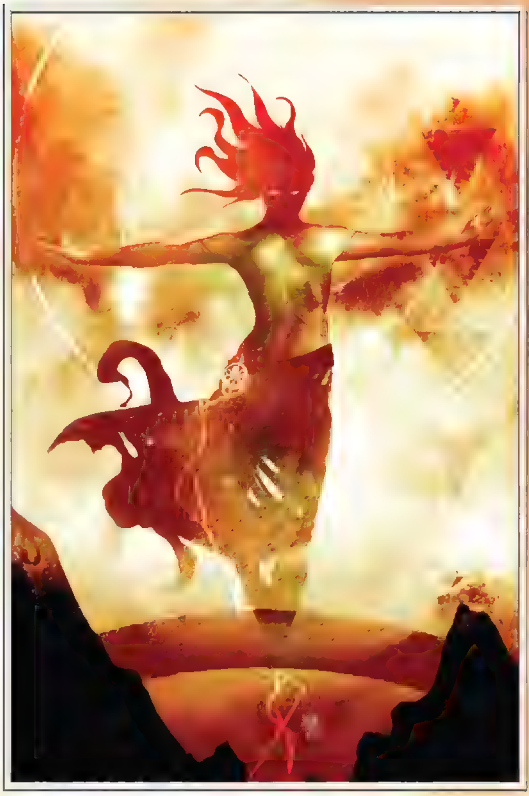

THE UPRISING
SECRET EMPIRE
JOIN
THE UPRISING

SECRET EMPIRE #5 VARIANT
BY **ANDREA SORRENTINO**

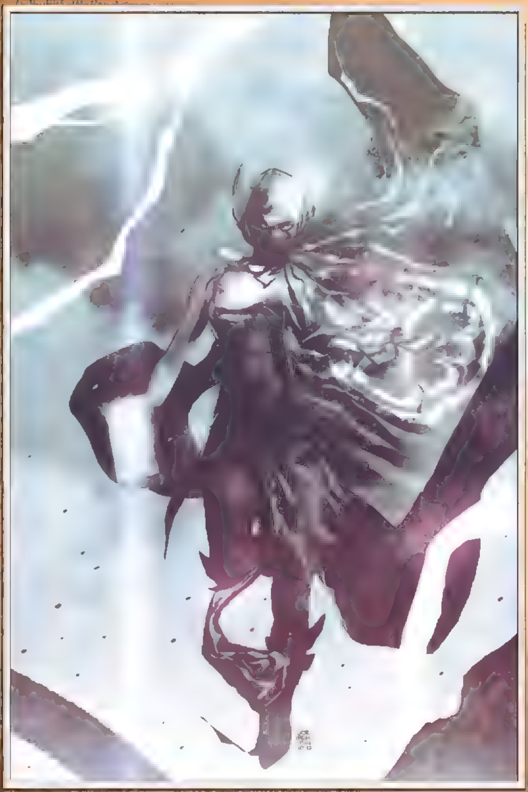
SECRET EMPIRE #10 VARIANT BY **GABRIELE DELL'OTTO**



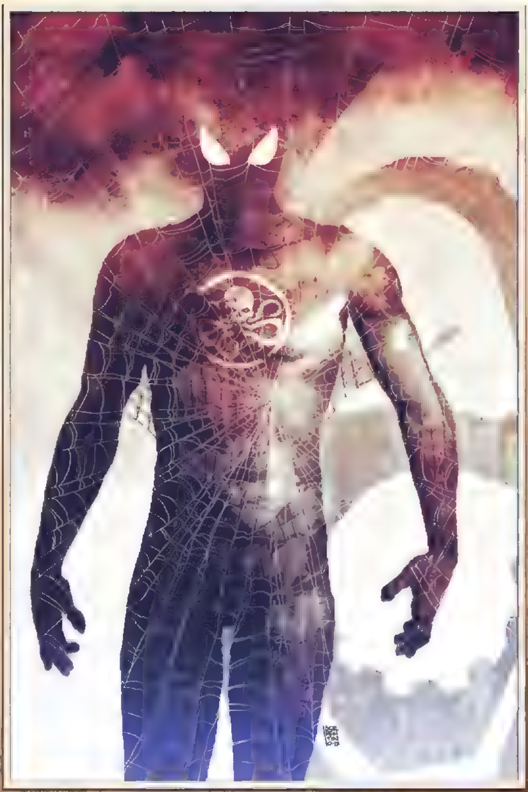
SECRET EMPIRE #1 HYDRA HEROES VARIANT
BY **ANDREA SORRENTINO**



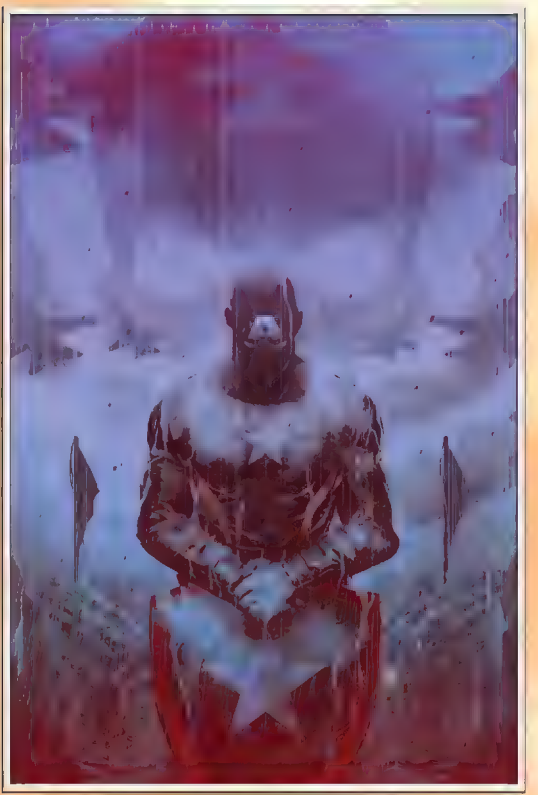
SECRET EMPIRE #2 HYDRA HEROES VARIANT
BY **ANDREA SORRENTINO**



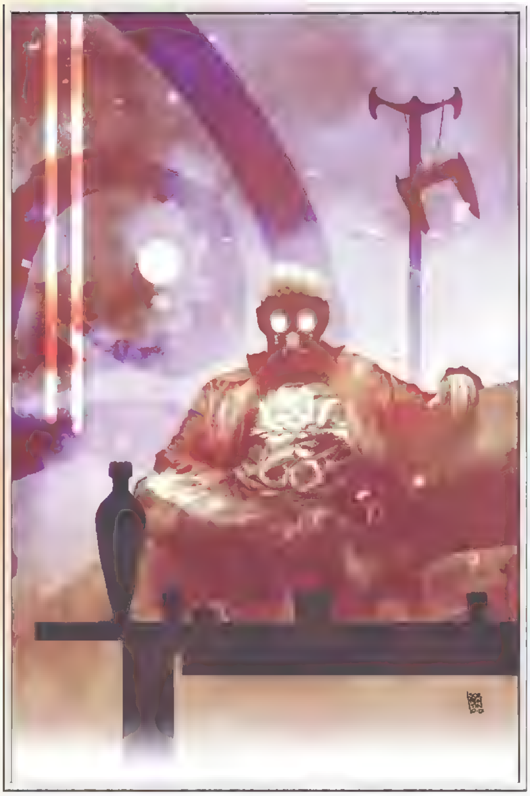
SECRET EMPIRE #3 HYDRA HEROES VARIANT
BY **ANDREA SORRENTINO**



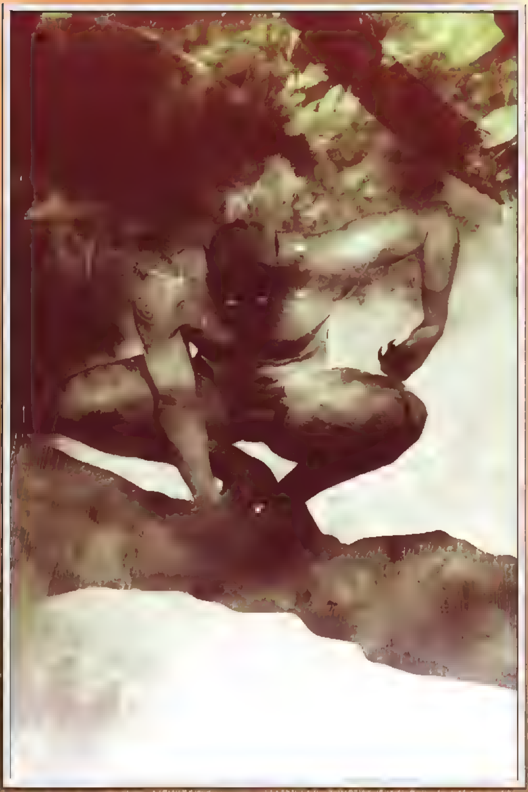
SECRET EMPIRE #4 HYDRA HEROES VARIANT
BY **ANDREA SORRENTINO**



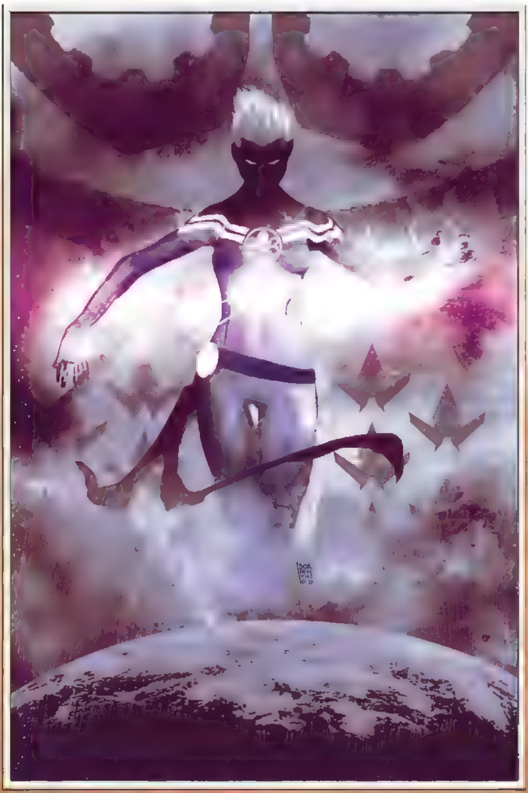
SECRET EMPIRE #5 HYDRA HEROES VARIANT
BY **ANDREA SORRENTINO**



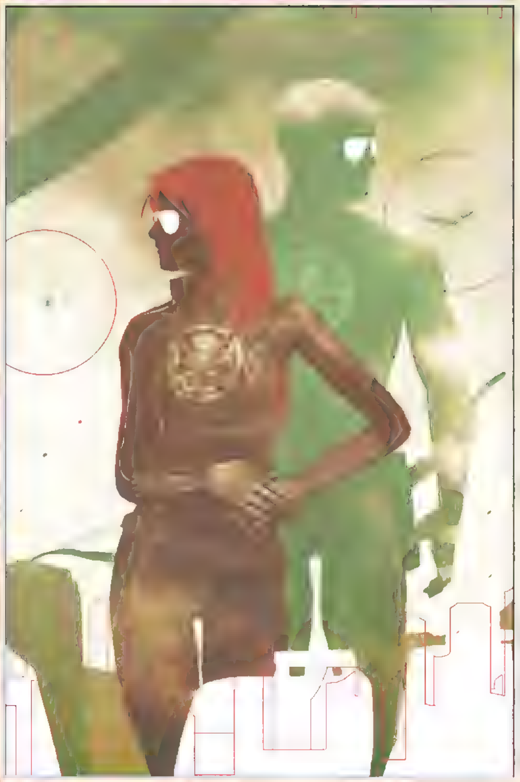
SECRET EMPIRE #6 HYDRA HEROES VARIANT
BY **ANDREA SORRENTINO**



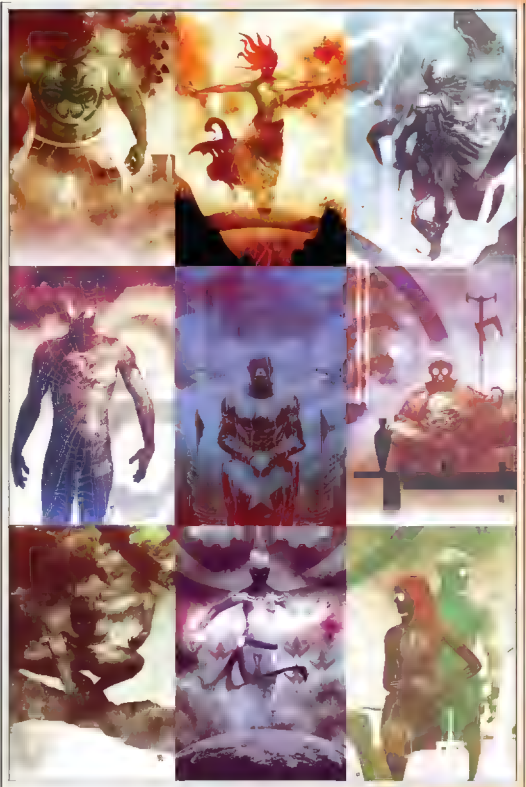
SECRET EMPIRE #7 HYDRA HEROES VARIANT
BY **ANDREA SORRENTINO**



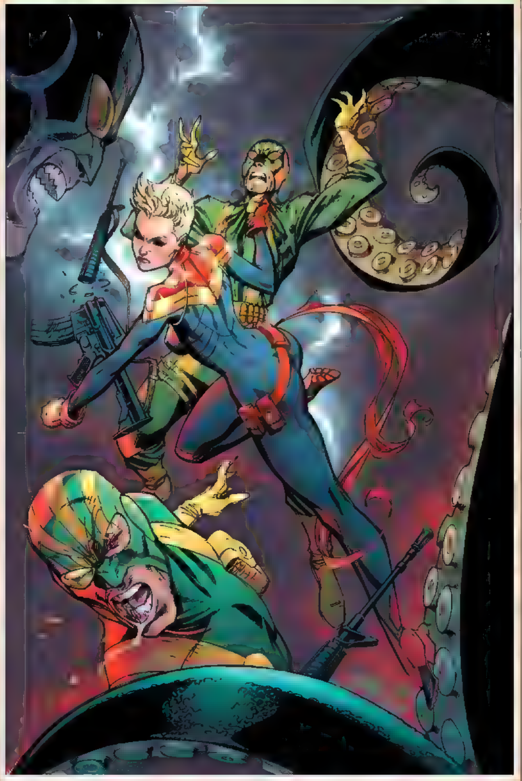
SECRET EMPIRE #8 HYDRA HEROES VARIANT
BY **ANDREA SORRENTINO**



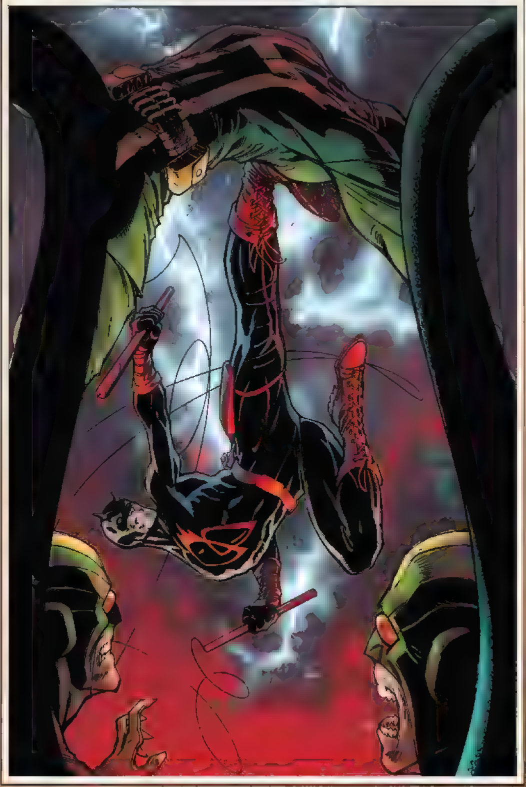
SECRET EMPIRE #9 HYDRA HEROES VARIANT
BY **ANDREA SORRENTINO**



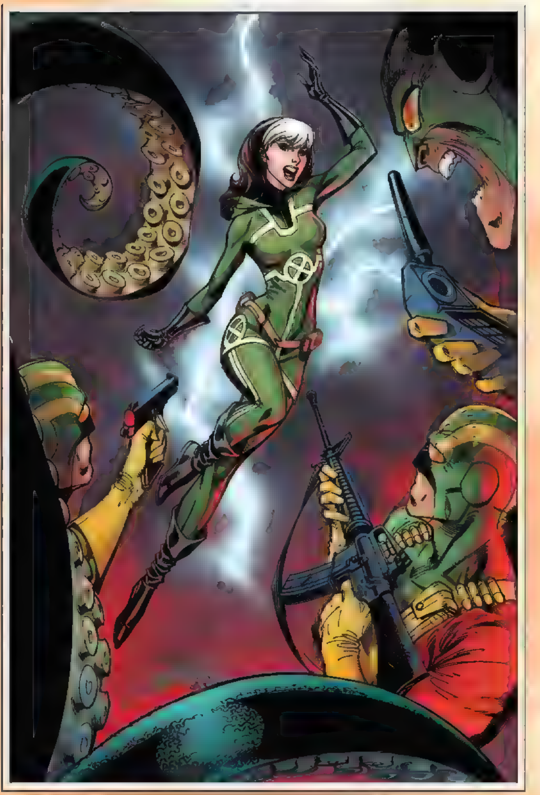
SECRET EMPIRE #10 HYDRA HEROES VARIANT
BY **ANDREA SORRENTINO**



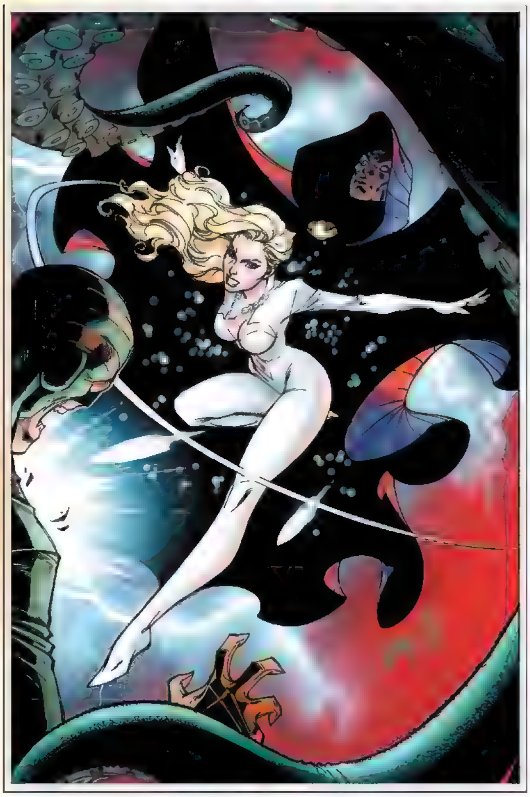
SECRET EMPIRE #1 VARIANT
BY **J. SCOTT CAMPBELL**
& **PETER STEIGERWALD**



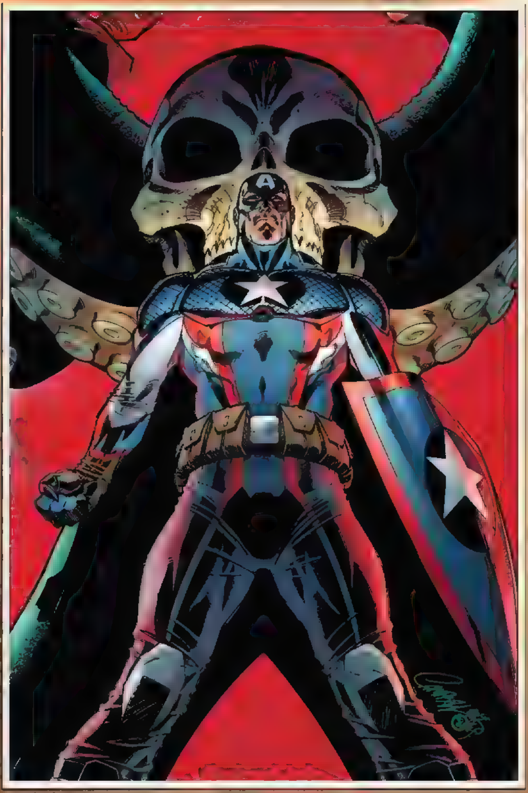
SECRET EMPIRE #2 VARIANT
BY **J. SCOTT CAMPBELL**
& **PETER STEIGERWALD**



SECRET EMPIRE #3 VARIANT
BY **J. SCOTT CAMPBELL**
& **PETER STEIGERWALD**



SECRET EMPIRE #4 VARIANT
BY **J. SCOTT CAMPBELL**
& **PETER STEIGERWALD**



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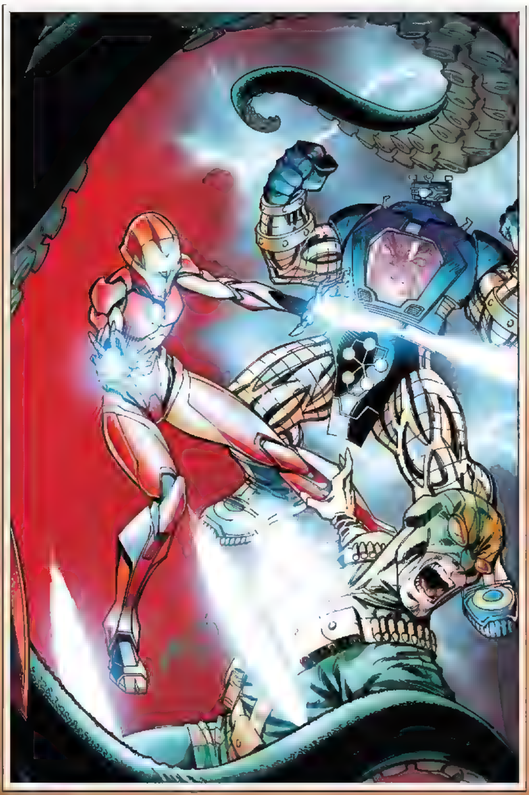

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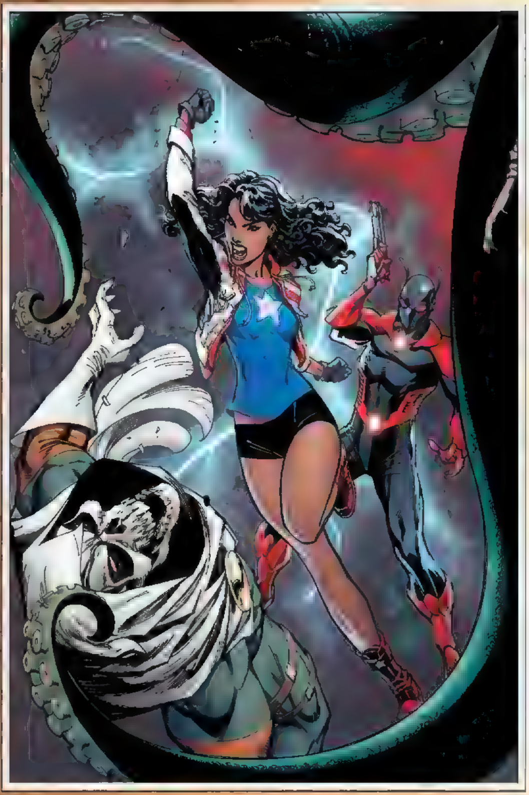
& **PETER STEIGERWALD**



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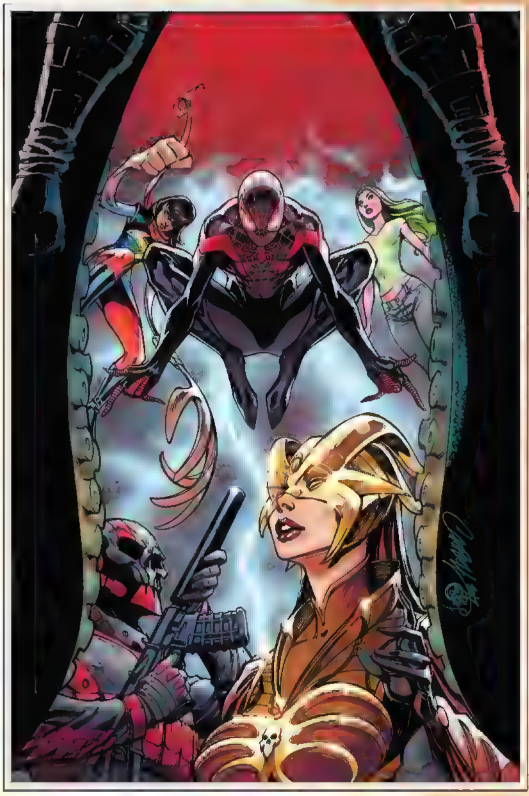
BY **J. SCOTT CAMPBELL**
& **PETER STEIGERWALD**



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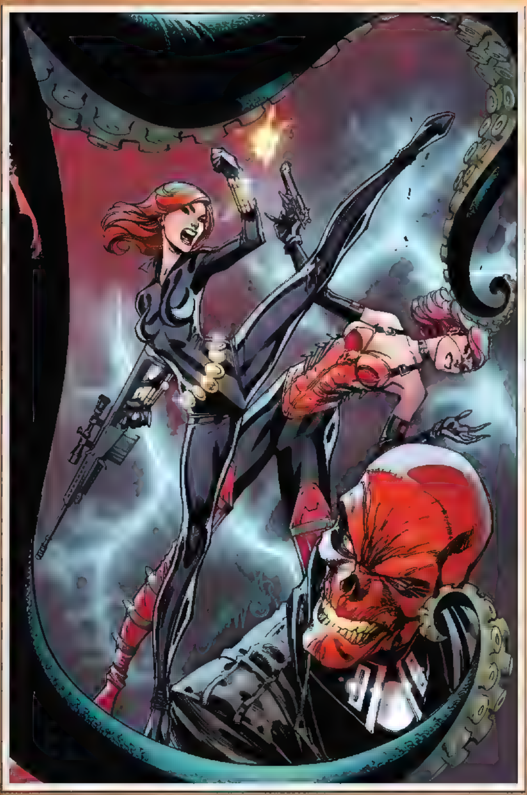
& **PETER STEIGERWALD**



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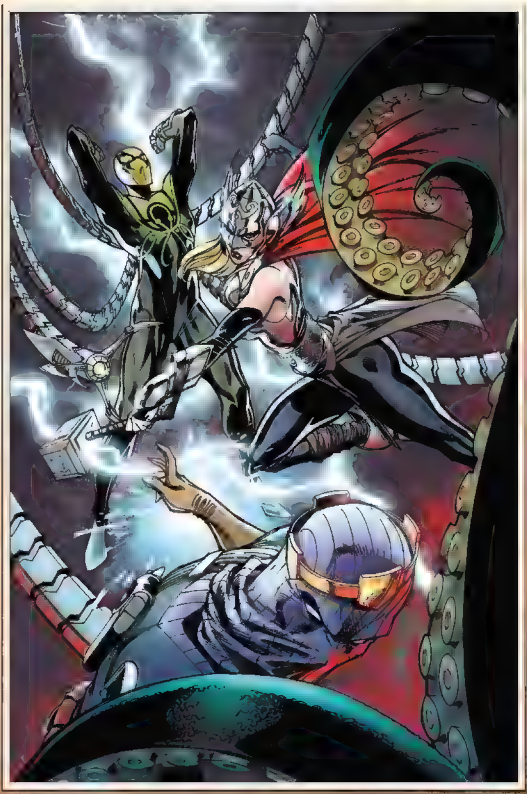

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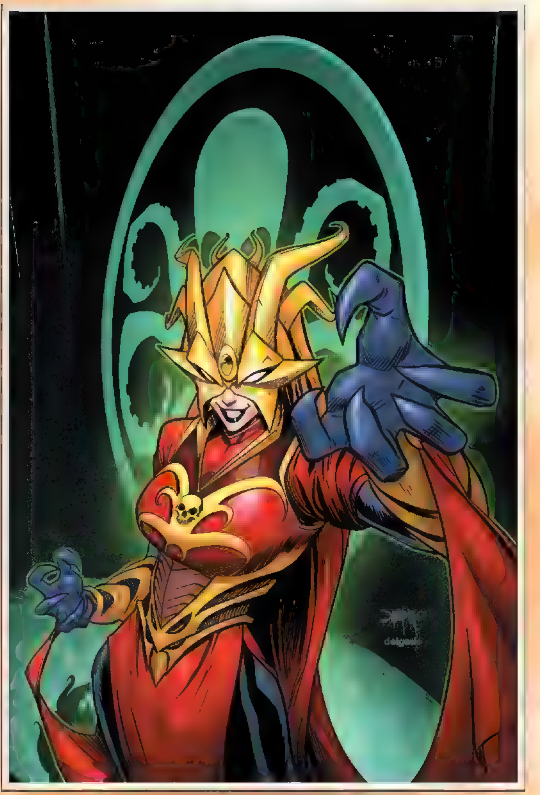
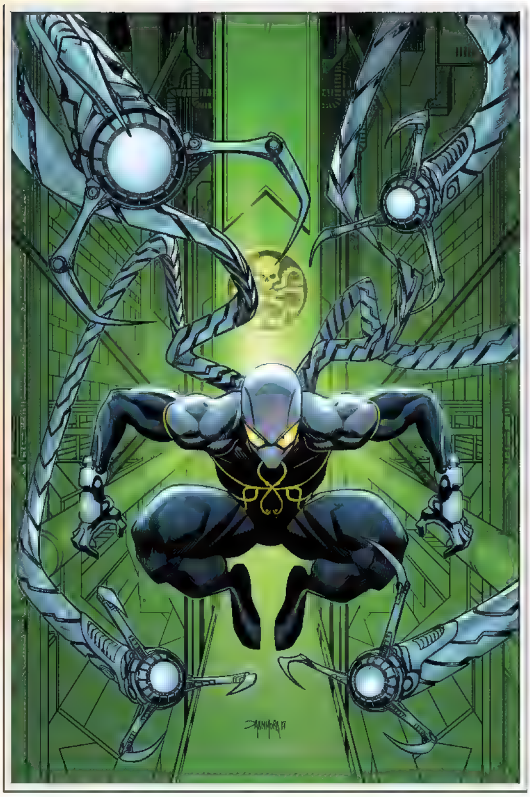
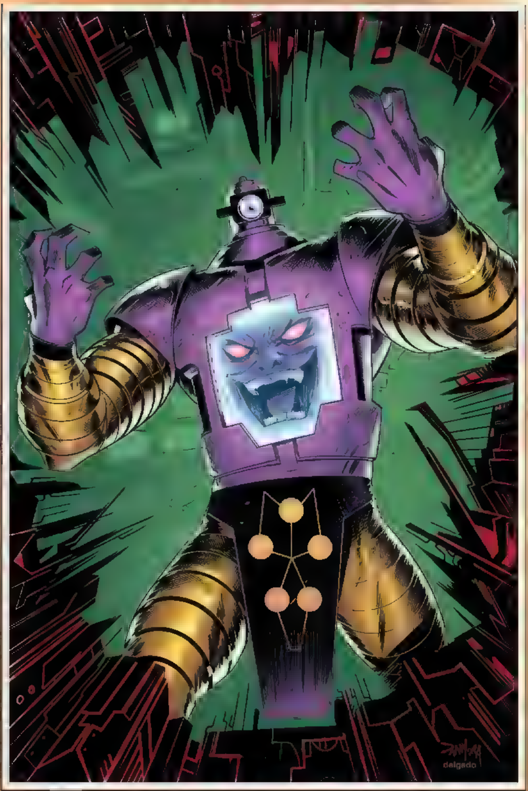
BY **J. SCOTT CAMPBELL**
& **PETER STEIGERWALD**



SECRET EMPIRE #1 VILLIAN VARIANT
BY **DAN MORA & EDGAR DELGADO**



SECRET EMPIRE #2 VILLIAN VARIANT
BY **DAN MORA & EDGAR DELGADO**



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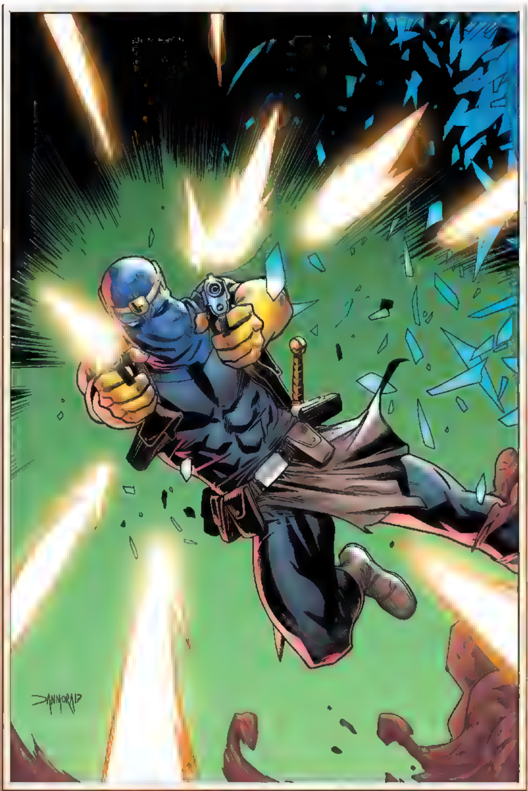
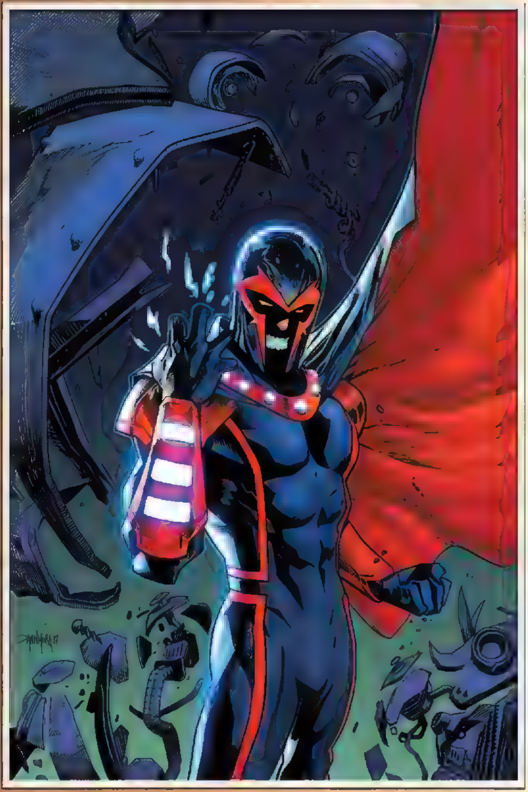
BY **DAN MORA & EDGAR DELGADO**



SECRET EMPIRE #4 VILLIAN VARIANT
BY **DAN MORA & EDGAR DELGADO**



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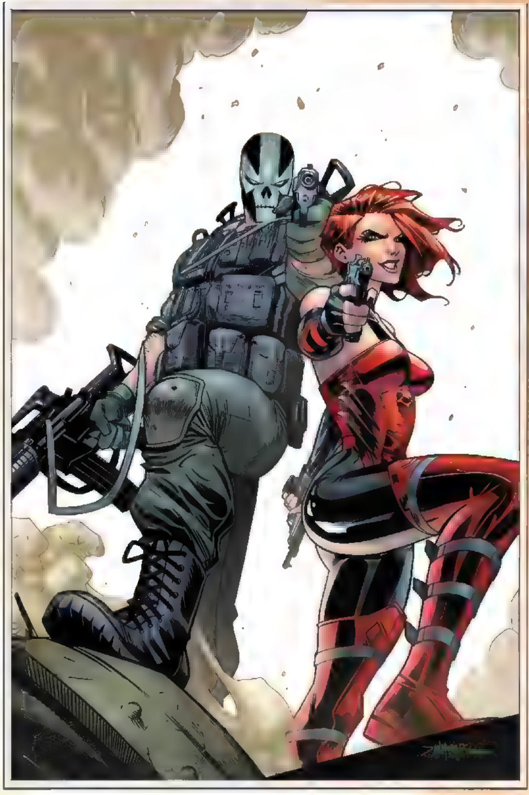
BY **DAN MORA & EDGAR DELGADO**



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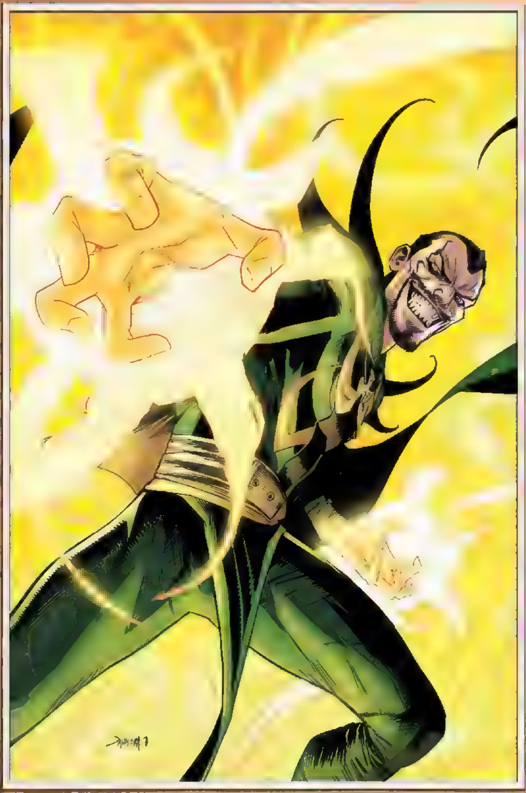
BY **DAN MORA & EDGAR DELGADO**



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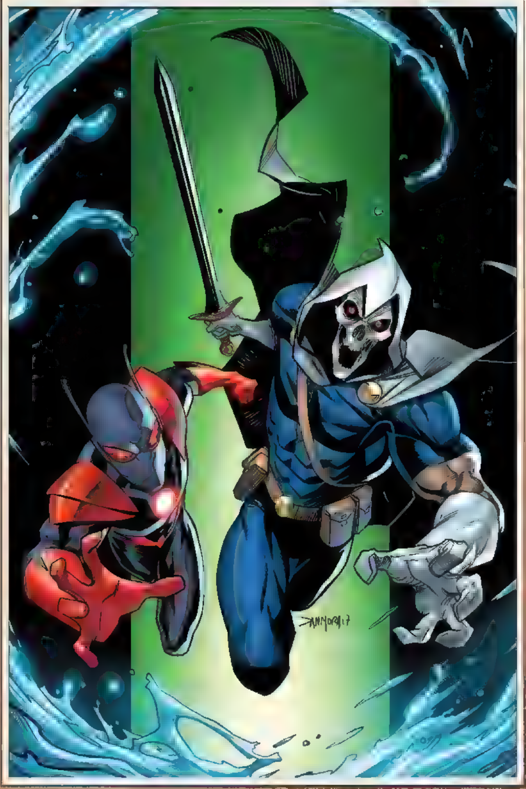
BY **DAN MORA & EDGAR DELGADO**



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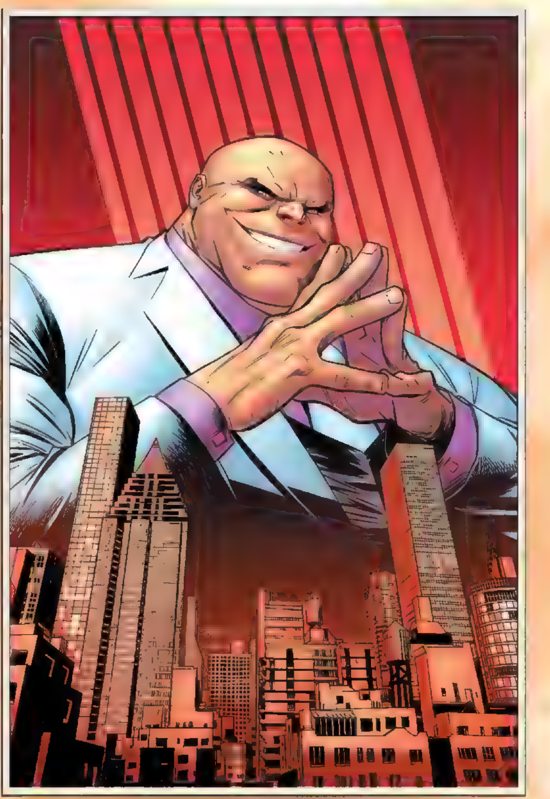
BY **DAN MORA & EDGAR DELGADO**



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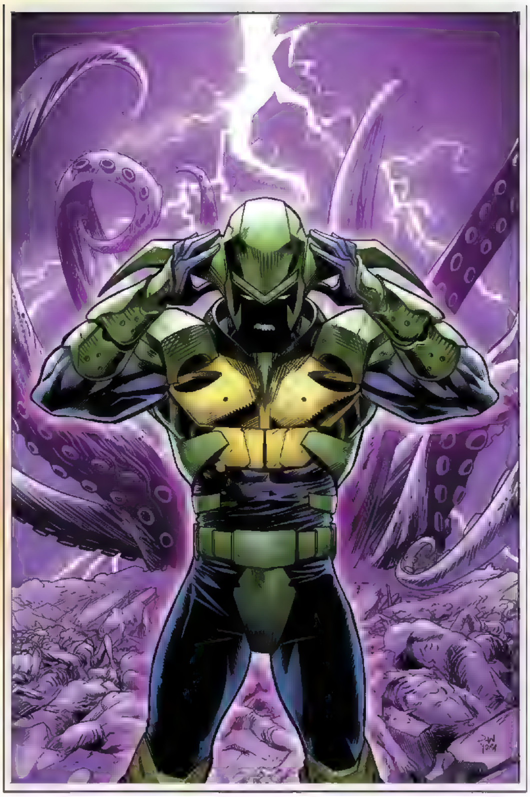
BY **DAN MORA & EDGAR DELGADO**



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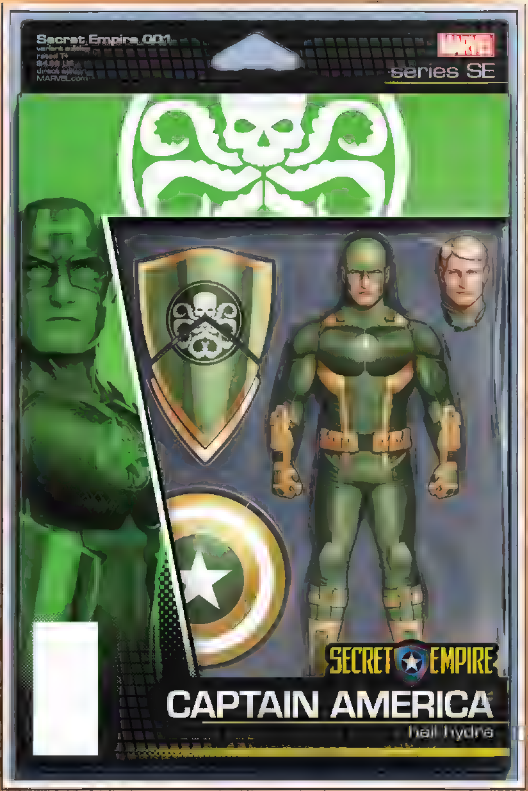
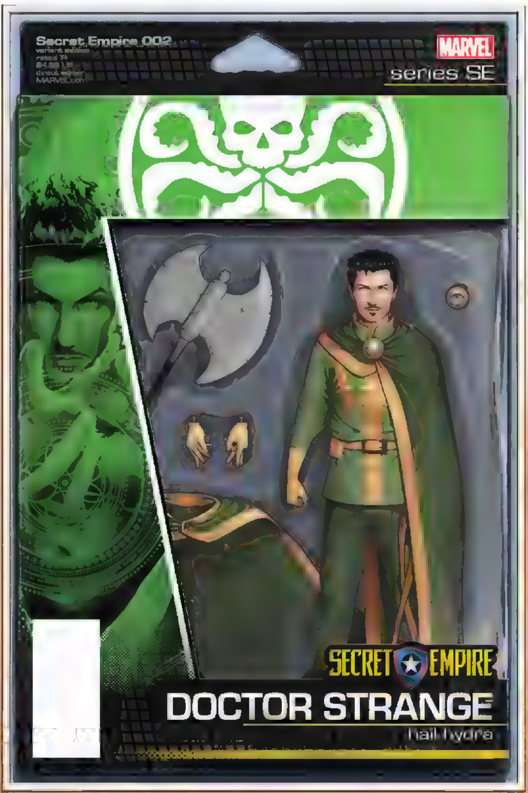
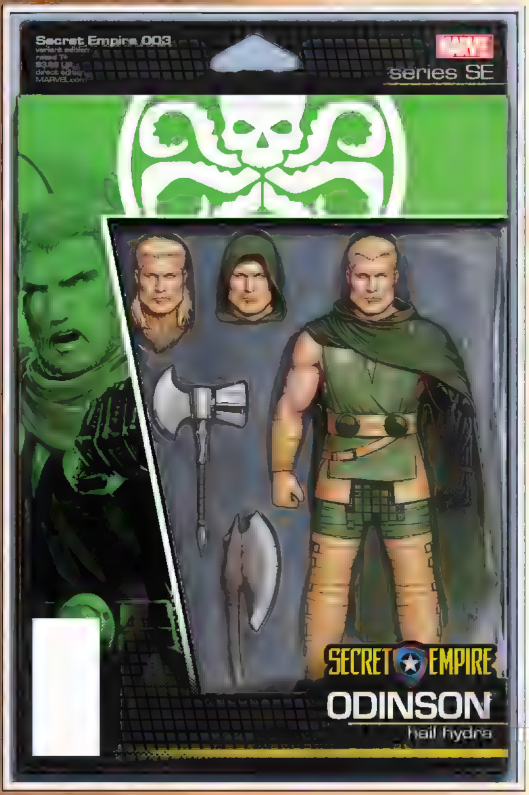
BY **DAN MORA & EDGAR DELGADO**


Secret Empire 001
MARVEL
series SE
SECRET EMPIRE
CAPTAIN AMERICA
hail hydra

SECRET EMPIRE #1 ACTION FIGURE VARIANT
BY **JOHN TYLER CHRISTOPHER**


Secret Empire 002
MARVEL
series SE
SECRET EMPIRE
DOCTOR STRANGE
hail hydra

SECRET EMPIRE #2 ACTION FIGURE VARIANT
BY **JOHN TYLER CHRISTOPHER**


Secret Empire 003
MARVEL
series SE
SECRET EMPIRE
ODINSON
hail hydra

SECRET EMPIRE #3 ACTION FIGURE VARIANT
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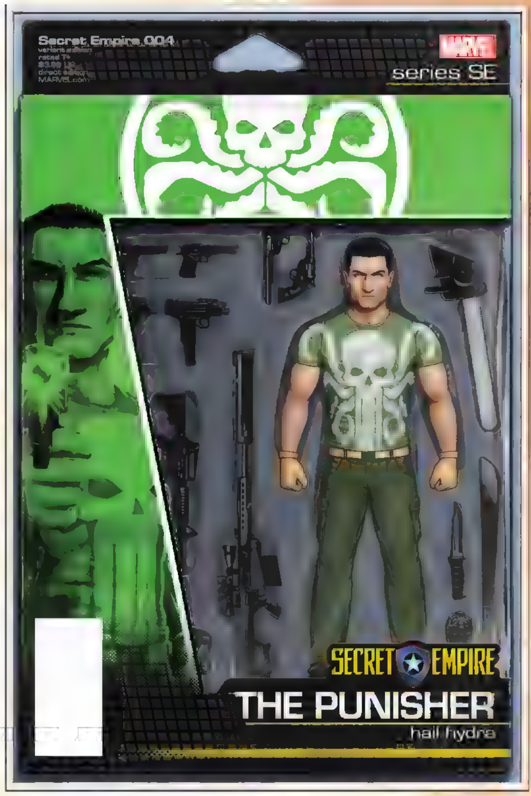
Secret Empire 004
MARVEL
series SE
SECRET EMPIRE
THE PUNISHER
hail hydra

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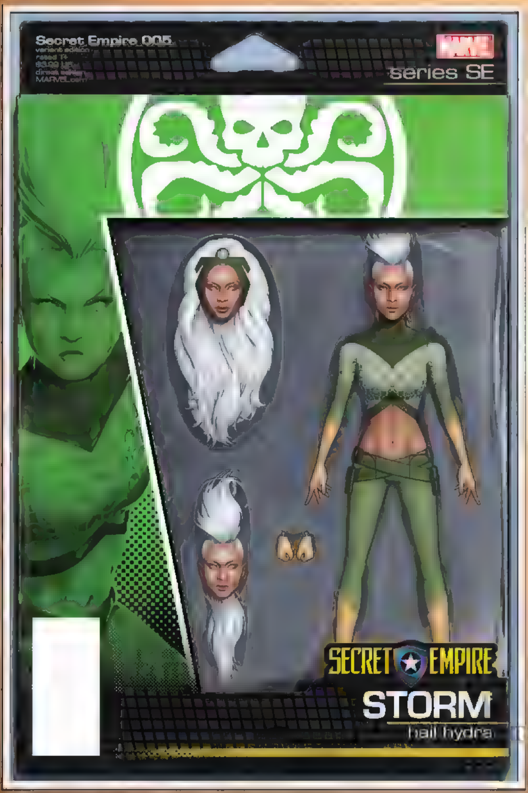
BY **JOHN TYLER CHRISTOPHER**


Secret Empire 005
MARVEL
series SE
SECRET EMPIRE
STORM
hail hydra

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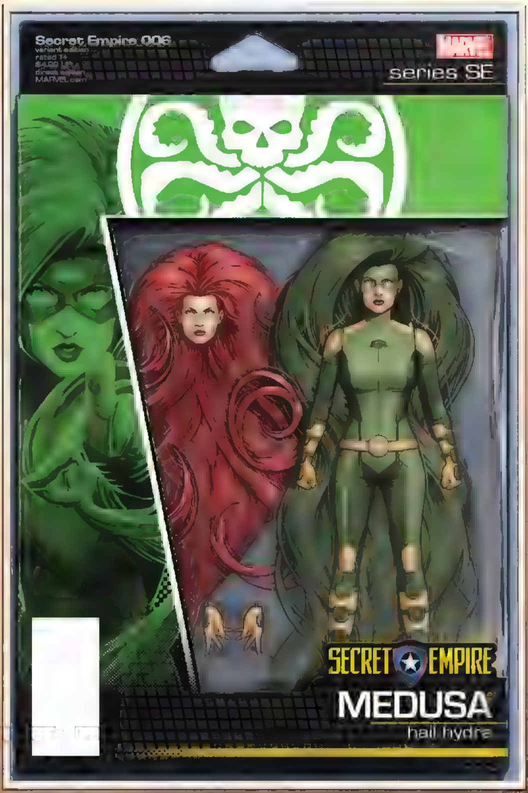
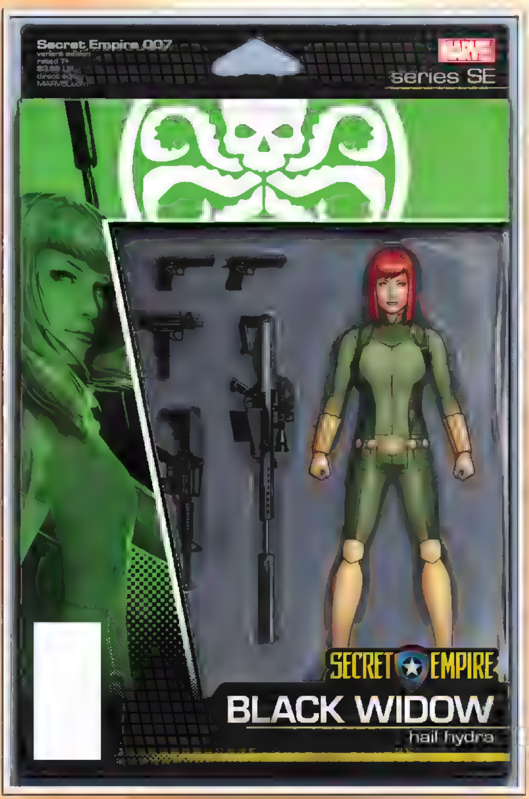
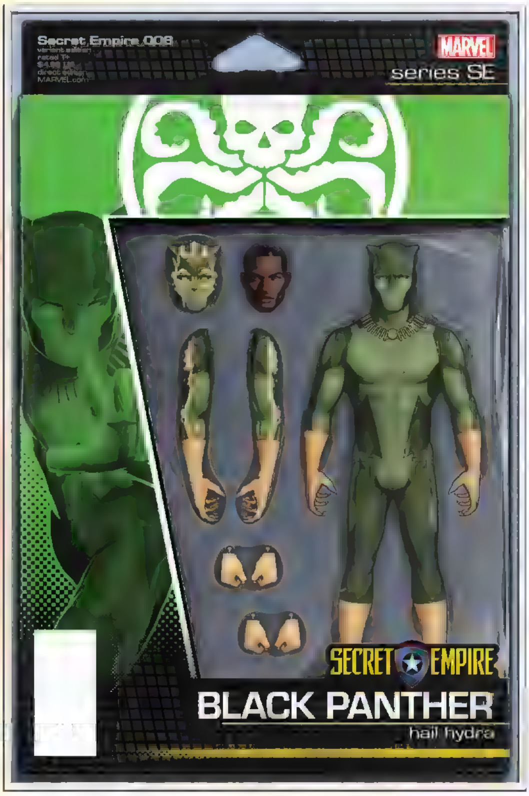
BY **JOHN TYLER CHRISTOPHER**


Secret Empire 006
MARVEL
series SE
SECRET EMPIRE
MEDUSA
hail hydra

SECRET EMPIRE #6 ACTION FIGURE VARIANT
BY **JOHN TYLER CHRISTOPHER**


Secret Empire 007
MARVEL
series SE
SECRET EMPIRE
BLACK WIDOW
hail hydra

SECRET EMPIRE #7 ACTION FIGURE VARIANT
BY **JOHN TYLER CHRISTOPHER**


Secret Empire 008
MARVEL
series SE
SECRET EMPIRE
BLACK PANTHER
hail hydra

SECRET EMPIRE #8 ACTION FIGURE VARIANT
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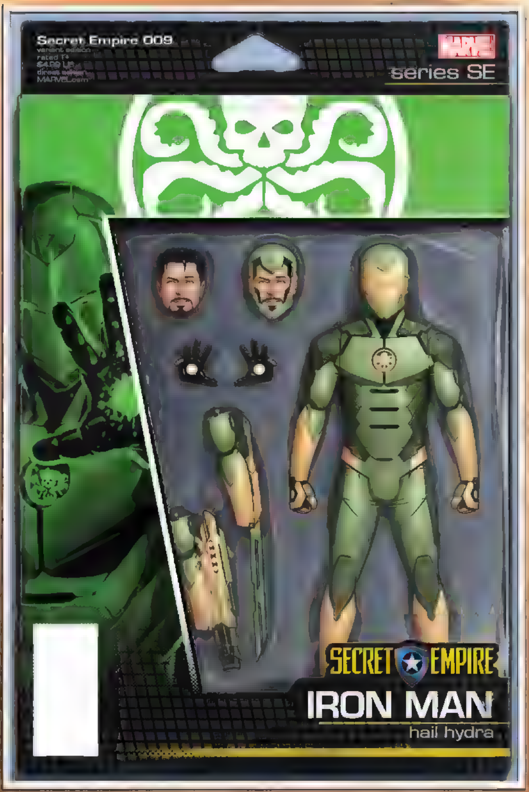
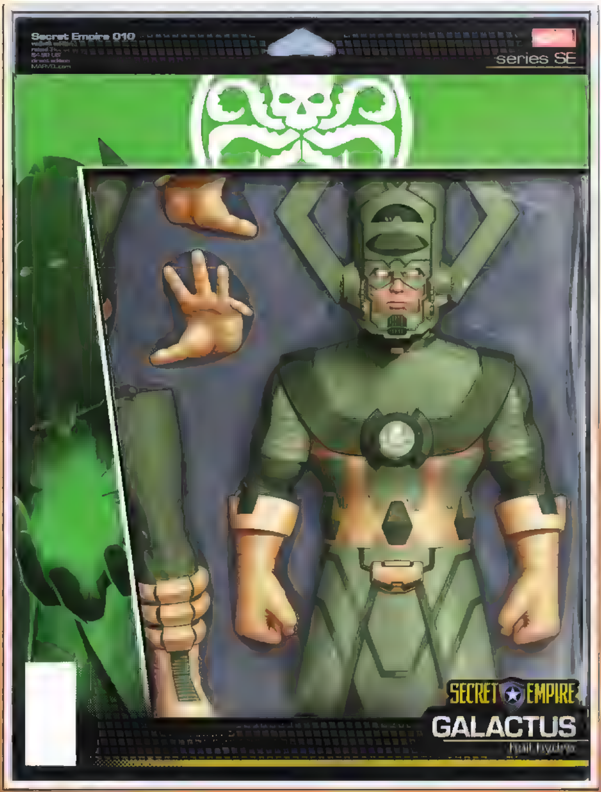
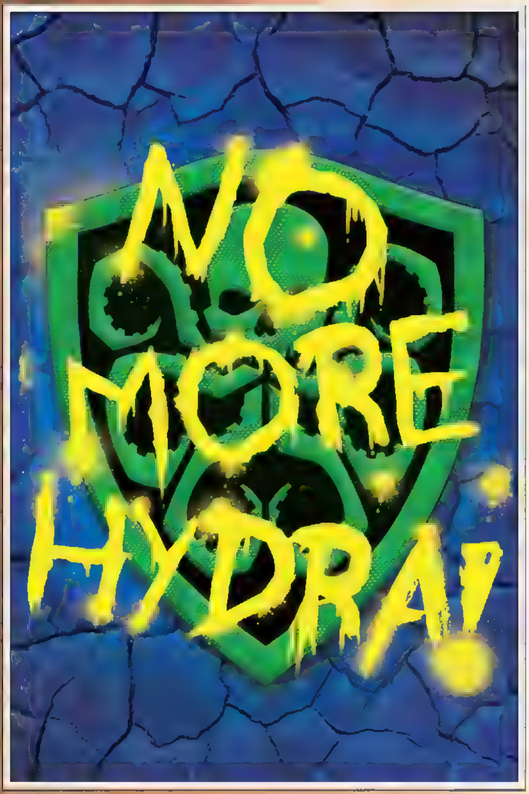

Secret Empire 009
MARVEL
series SE
SECRET EMPIRE
IRON MAN
hail hydra

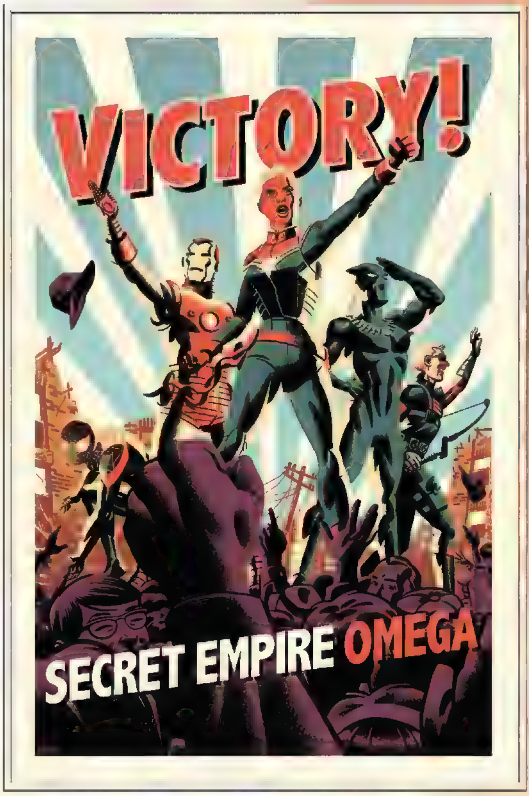
SECRET EMPIRE #9 ACTION FIGURE VARIANT
BY **JOHN TYLER CHRISTOPHER**


Secret Empire 010
series SE
SECRET EMPIRE
GALACTUS
hail hydra

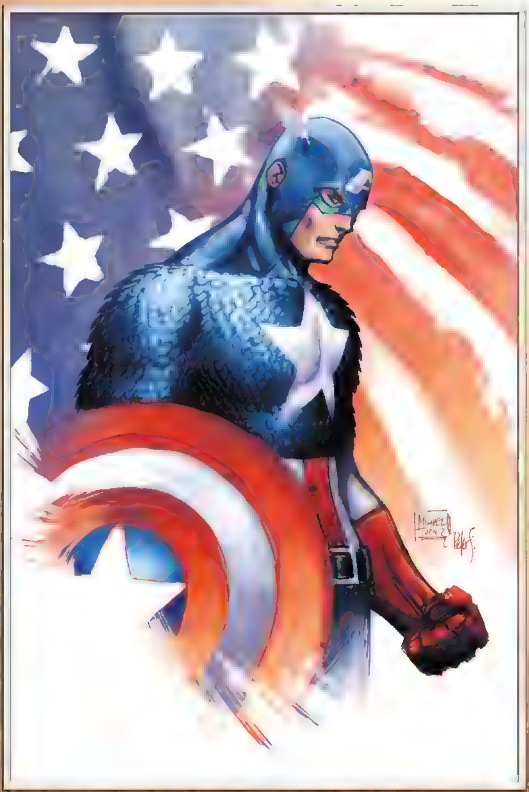
SECRET EMPIRE #10 ACTION FIGURE VARIANT
BY **JOHN TYLER CHRISTOPHER**


NO MORE HYDRA!

SECRET EMPIRE #10 SHIELD VARIANT
BY **CARLOS LAO**

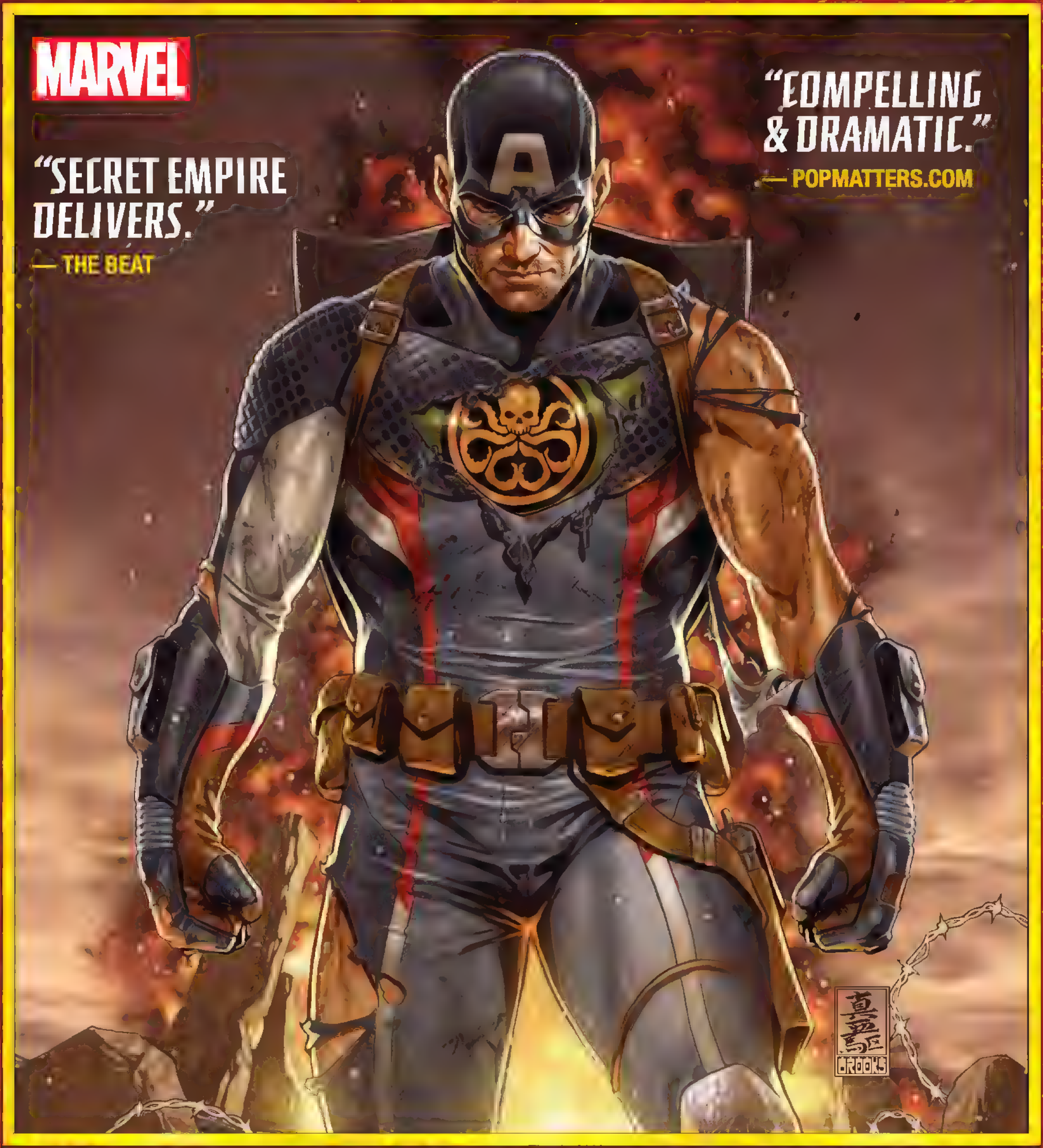

VICTORY!
SECRET EMPIRE OMEGA

SECRET EMPIRE OMEGA VARIANT
BY **MICHAEL CHO**



SECRET EMPIRE OMEGA VARIANT
BY **MICHAEL TURNER & PETER STEIGERWALD**

MARVEL



"SECRET EMPIRE DELIVERS."
— THE BEAT

"COMPELLING & DRAMATIC."
— POPMATTERS.COM

# HAIL HYDRA!

THE SENTINEL OF LIBERTY IS THE ENEMY OF FREEDOM! WHEN A COSMIC CUBE REWROTE CAPTAIN AMERICA'S HISTORY, STEVE ROGERS BECAME THE ULTIMATE SLEEPER AGENT. IN THE MONTHS SINCE, THE MASTER STRATEGIST HAS OPERATED IN SECRET WHILE EMBRACING HIS DESTINY TO BECOME HYDRA'S SUPREME LEADER. NOW, ALL THE PIECES ARE IN PLACE, AND THE TIME HAS COME FOR HIM TO IMPOSE HIS NEW WORLD ORDER. HE HAS PLANS TO DEAL WITH EARTH'S MOST POWERFUL HEROES, AS WELL AS NEW YORK'S DEFENDERS. BUT WHICH AVENGERS WILL FIGHT BY HIS SIDE? AND AS HIS DEVASTATING PLOT UNFOLDS AND HYDRA TAKES HOLD OF THE UNITED STATES, WILL ANYBODY BE LEFT TO STAND AGAINST HIM? WITH EVERYTHING YOU KNOW IN THE BALANCE, IS THERE ANY HOPE FOR THE MARVEL UNIVERSE — OR FOR STEVE ROGERS?

COLLECTING *SECRET EMPIRE #0-10* AND *OMEGA*, *CAPTAIN AMERICA #25* AND MATERIAL FROM *FREE COMIC BOOK DAY (SECRET EMPIRE)* — BY NICK SPENCER, DANIEL ACUÑA, ROD REIS, ANDREA SORRENTINO, STEVE McNIVEN, LEINIL FRANCIS YU, JOSHUA CASSARA, SEAN IZAAKSE, JOE BENNETT, DAVID MARQUEZ, PACO MEDINA, JUAN VLASCO, JAY LEISTEN, GERRY ALANGUILAN, JOE PIMENTEL, SCOTT HANNA, MATTHEW WILSON, SUNNY GHO, RACHELLE ROSENBERG, JAVA TARTAGLIA, DONO SÁNCHEZ-ALMARA AND JESUS ABURTOV.

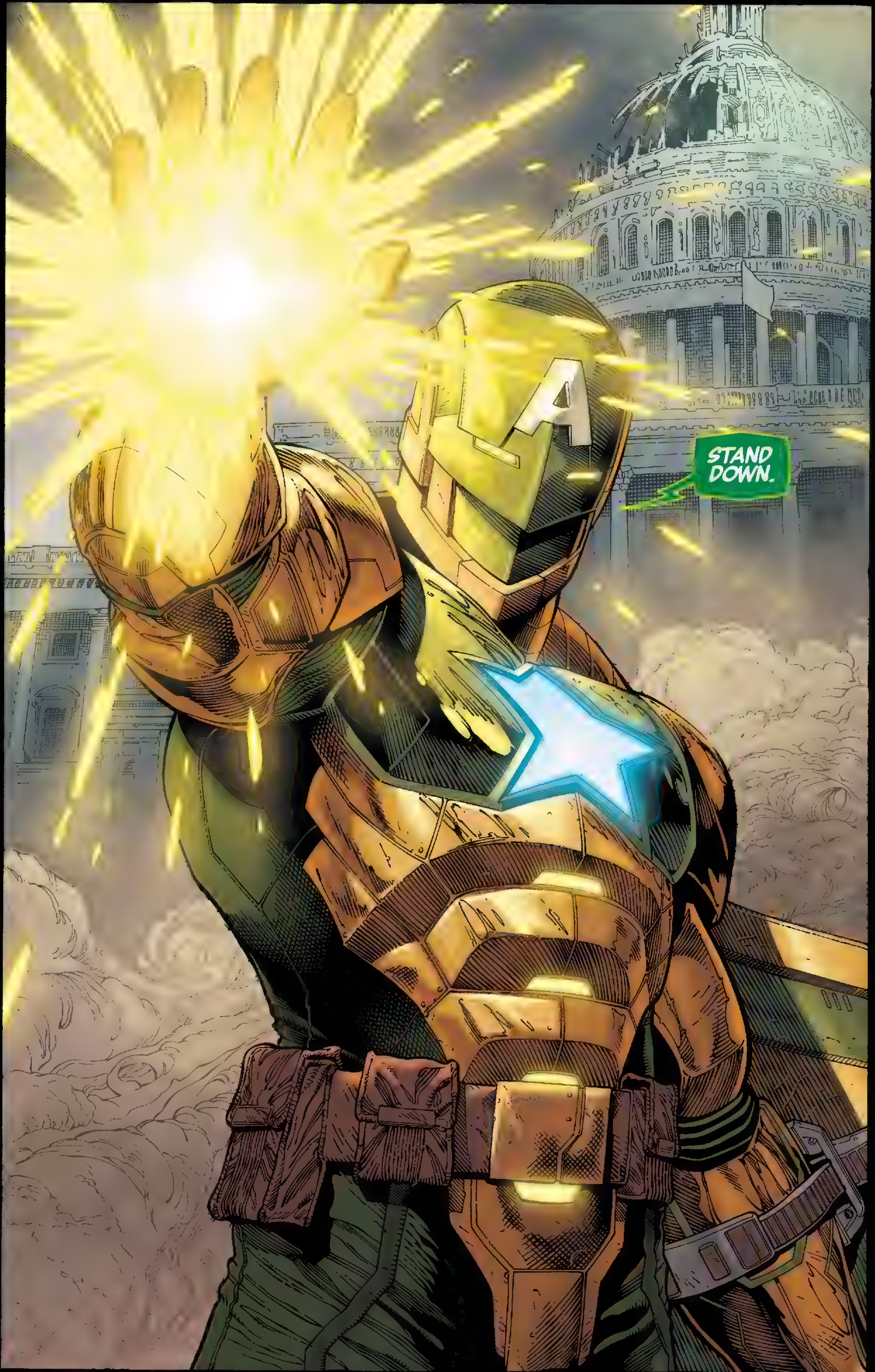
T+

# SECRET EMPIRE™

MARVEL

#10

NICK SPENCER, STEVE McNIVEN, ROD REIS, DAVID MARQUEZ, PACO MEDINA


STAND DOWN.

# SECRET EMPIRE

A sentient Cosmic Cube named Kobik turned Steve Rogers, A.K.A. Captain America, into an agent of Hydra--and he used his mantle as the most trusted hero in the world to claim the United States for his new cause.

Led by Sam Wilson, the Underground struck a series of decisive blows against Hydra, and was on the verge of victory...until Steve Rogers appeared on the battlefield, wearing armor powered by the nearly complete Cosmic Cube.

Is this the end of the Hydra Empire...or the end of everything?

**Writer** ▪ Nick Spencer **Pencils** ▪ Steve McNiven
**Inks** ▪ Jay Leisten **Colors** ▪ Matthew Wilson
**Additional Art** ▪ Rod Reis; David Marquez;
Paco Medina, Juan Vlasco & Jesus Aburtov; Ron Lim
**Letterer** ▪ VC's Travis Lanham
**Recap Page Art** ▪ Andrea Sorrentino
**Cover** ▪ Mark Brooks
**Variant Covers** ▪ Dan Mora & Edgar Delgado;
Andrea Sorrentino; John Tyler Christopher;
Alex Ross; Gabriele Dell'Otto; Jack Kirby, Dick Ayers
& Paul Mounts with Joe Frontirre; Carlos Lao

**Production Design** ▪ Carlos Lao **Assistant Editor** ▪ Alanna Smith
**Editor** ▪ Tom Brevoort **Editor in Chief** ▪ Axel Alonso
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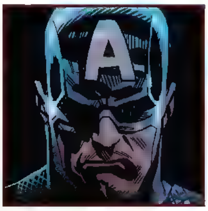
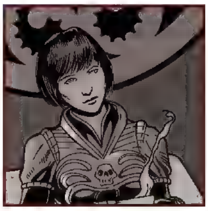
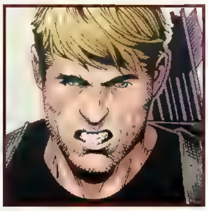
## Hydra

Hydra Command


Captain America


Madame Hydra

## The Underground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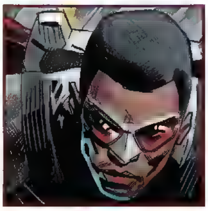
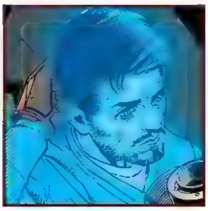
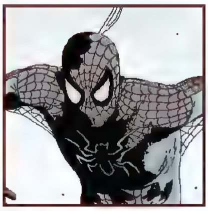

Captain America


Tony Stark (A.I.)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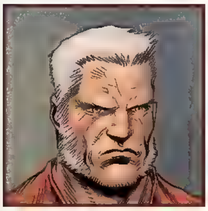
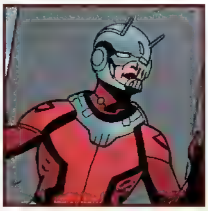

Old Man Logan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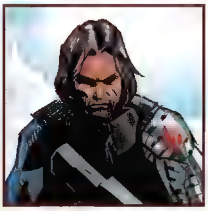
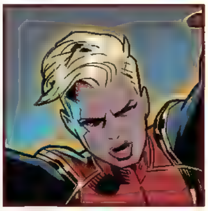
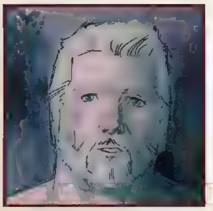
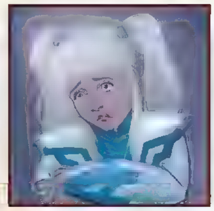
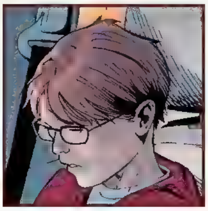
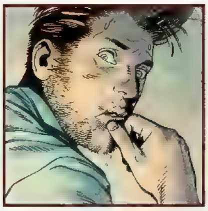

Winter Soldier

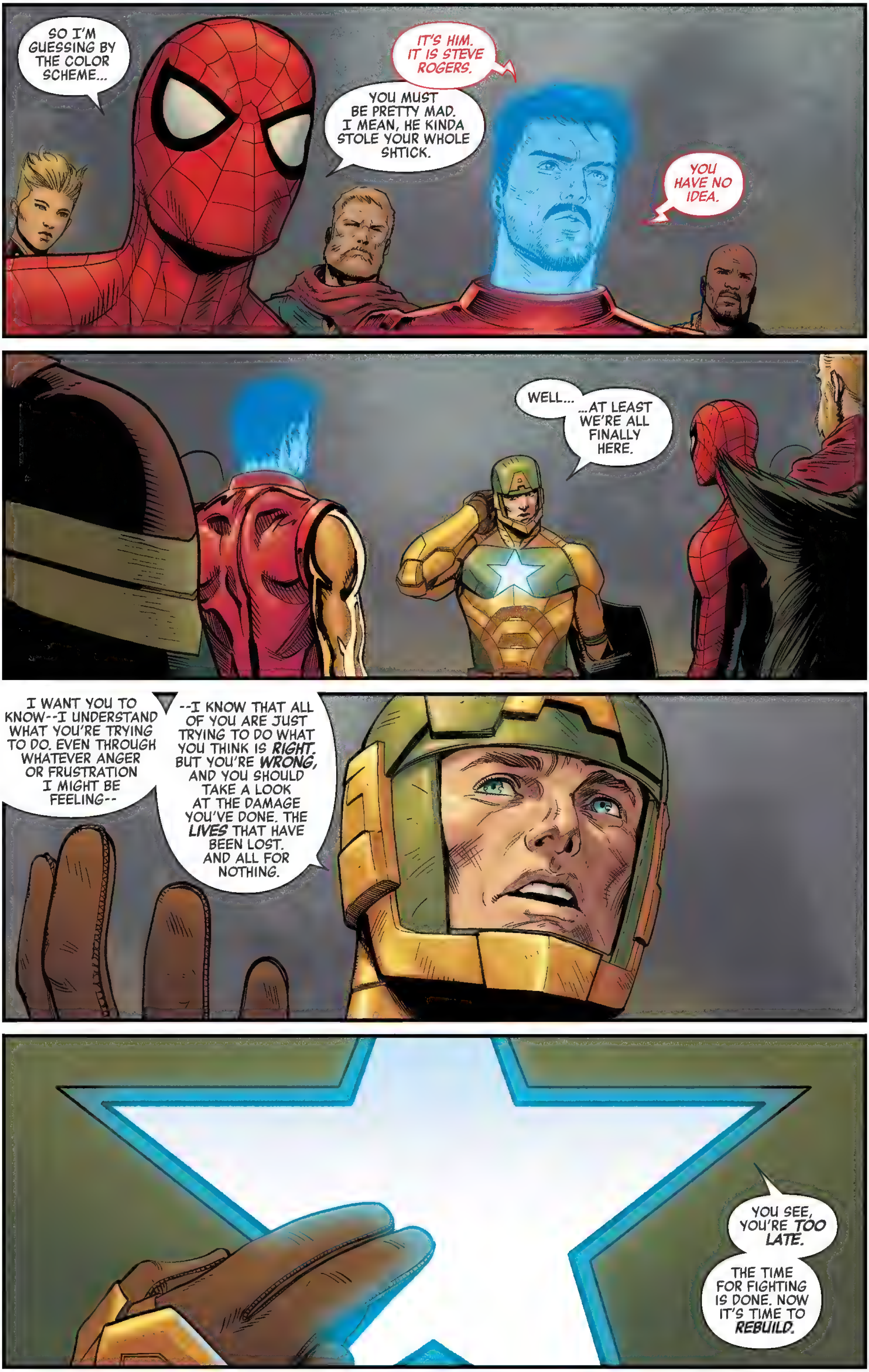

Captain Marvel

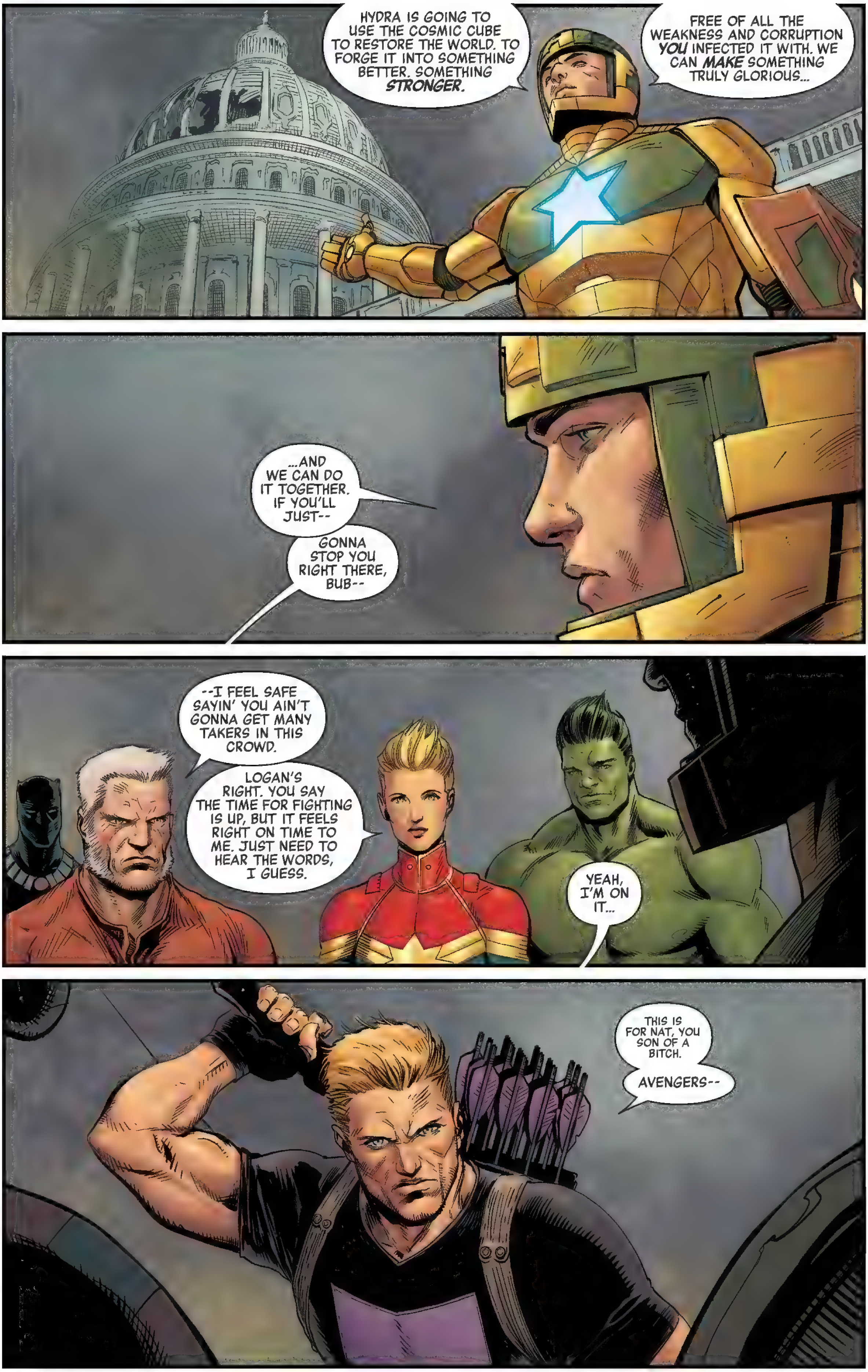

Steve Rogers

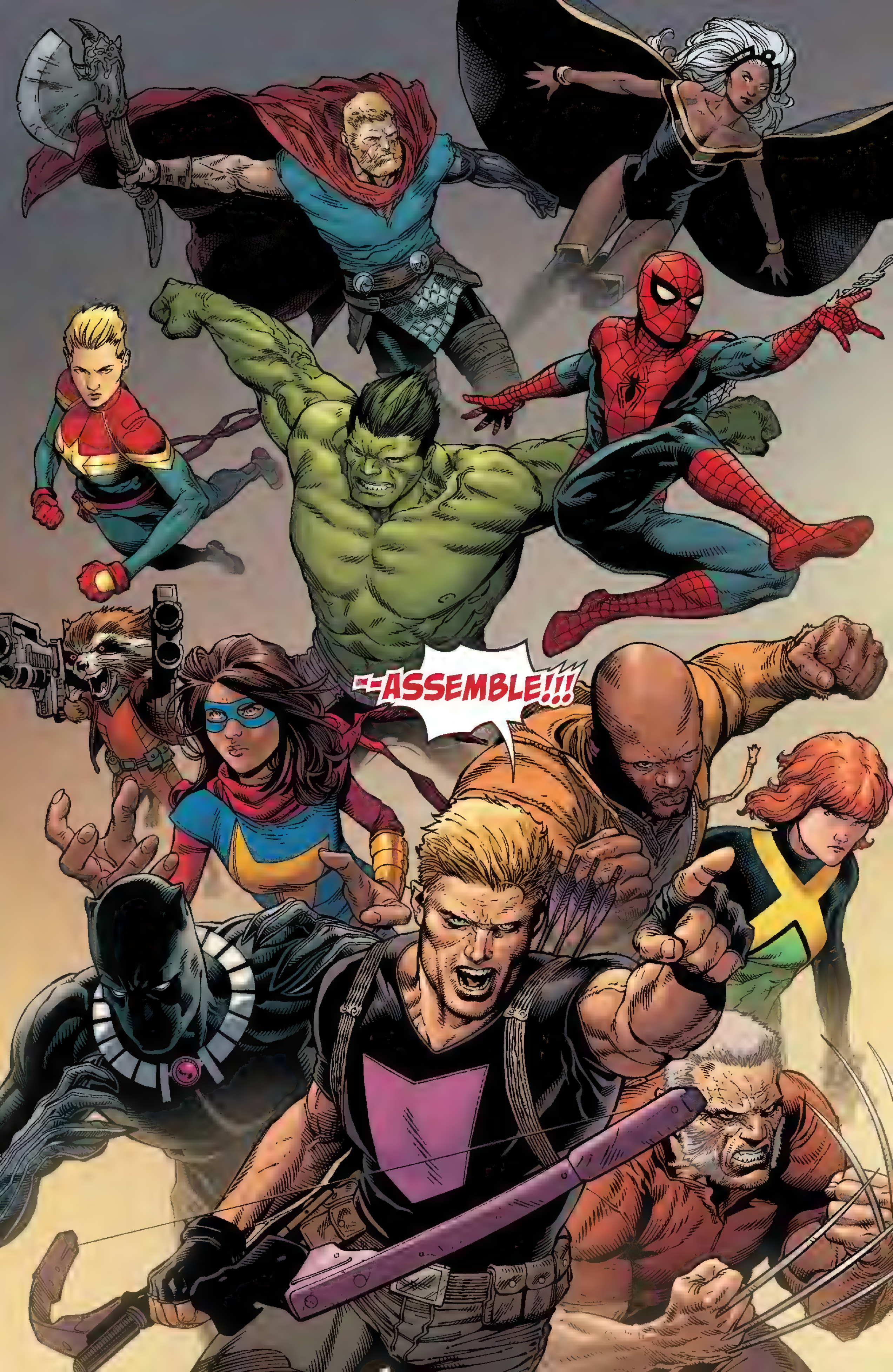

Kobik

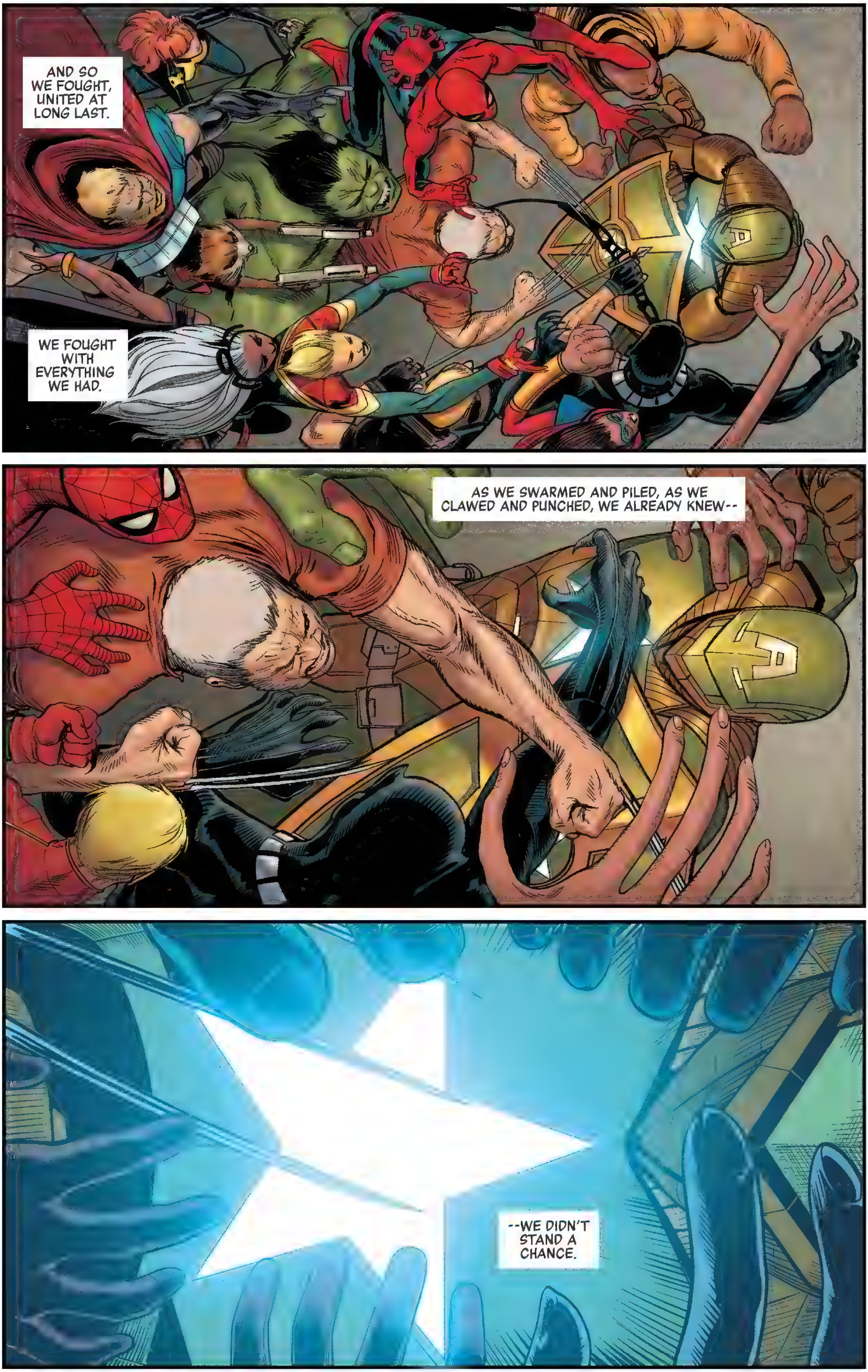

Jason McAllister

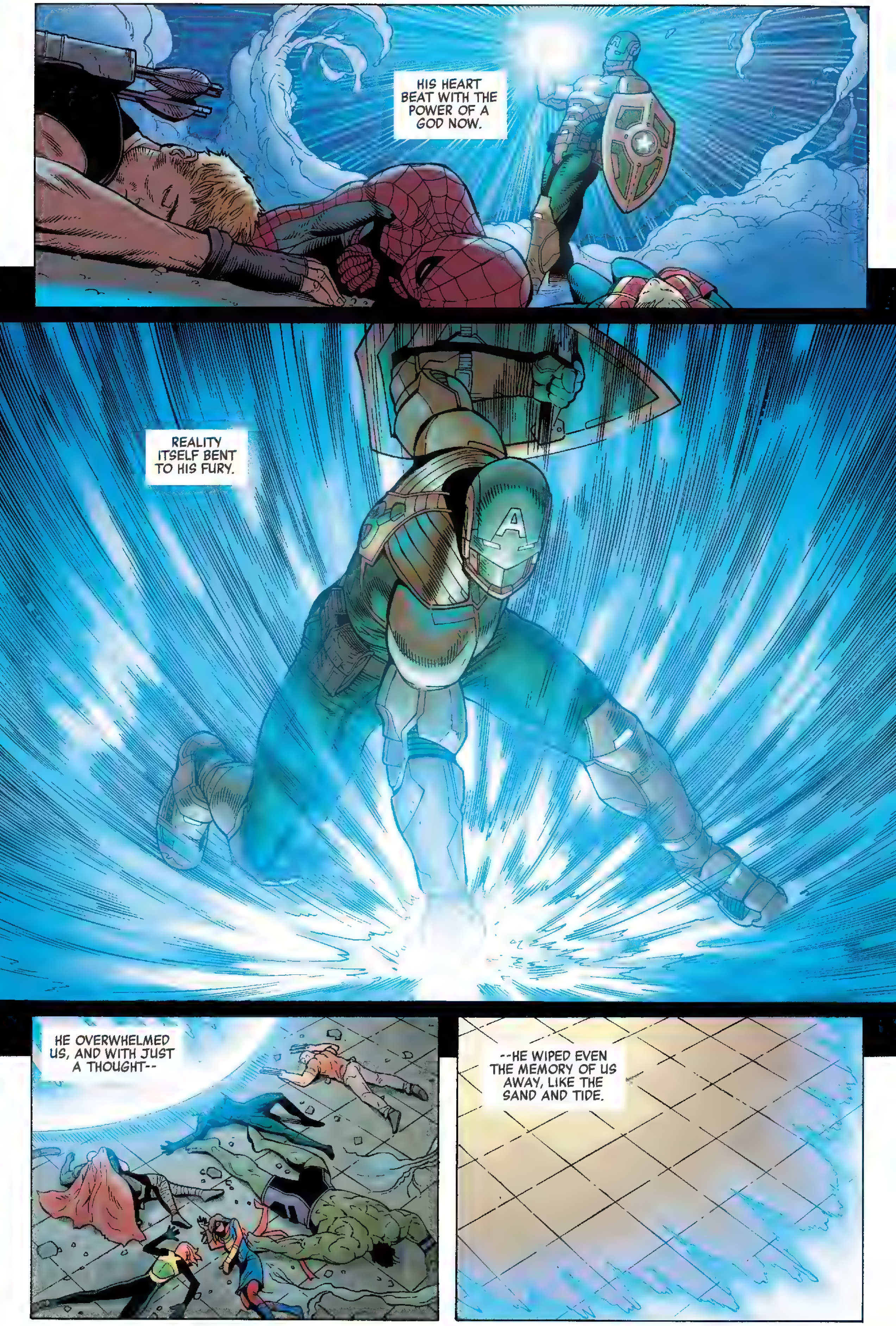

Brian McAllister

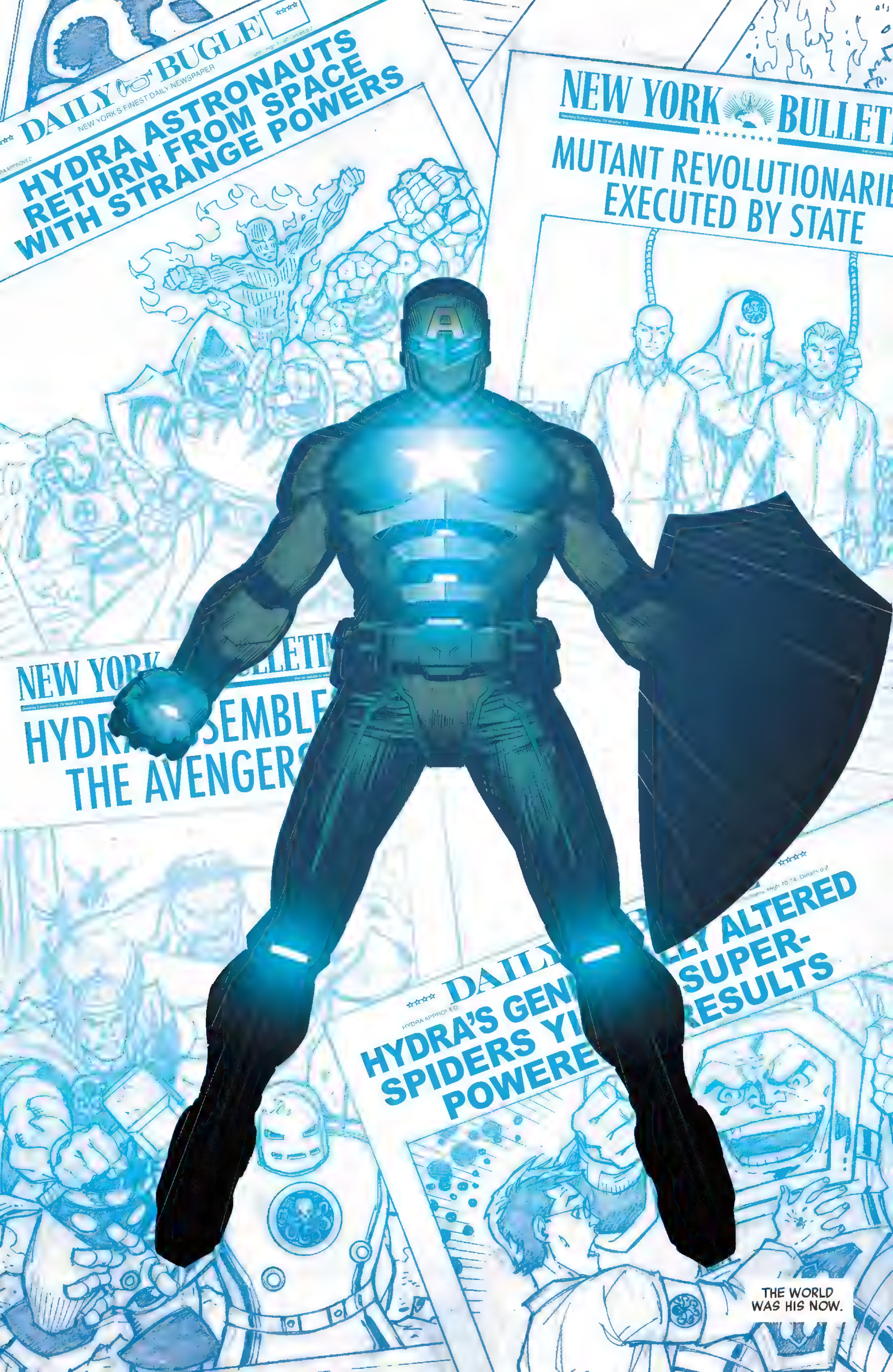

SO I'M GUESSING BY THE COLOR SCHEME...
IT'S HIM. IT IS STEVE ROGERS.
YOU MUST BE PRETTY MAD. I MEAN, HE KINDA STOLE YOUR WHOLE SHTICK.
YOU HAVE NO IDEA.
WELL...
...AT LEAST WE'RE ALL FINALLY HERE.
I WANT YOU TO KNOW--I UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU'RE TRYING TO DO. EVEN THROUGH WHATEVER ANGER OR FRUSTRATION I MIGHT BE FEELING--
--I KNOW THAT ALL OF YOU ARE JUST TRYING TO DO WHAT YOU THINK IS *RIGHT*. BUT YOU'RE *WRONG*, AND YOU SHOULD TAKE A LOOK AT THE DAMAGE YOU'VE DONE. THE *LIVES* THAT HAVE BEEN LOST. AND ALL FOR NOTHING.
YOU SEE, YOU'RE *TOO LATE*.
THE TIME FOR FIGHTING IS DONE. NOW IT'S TIME TO *REBUILD*.

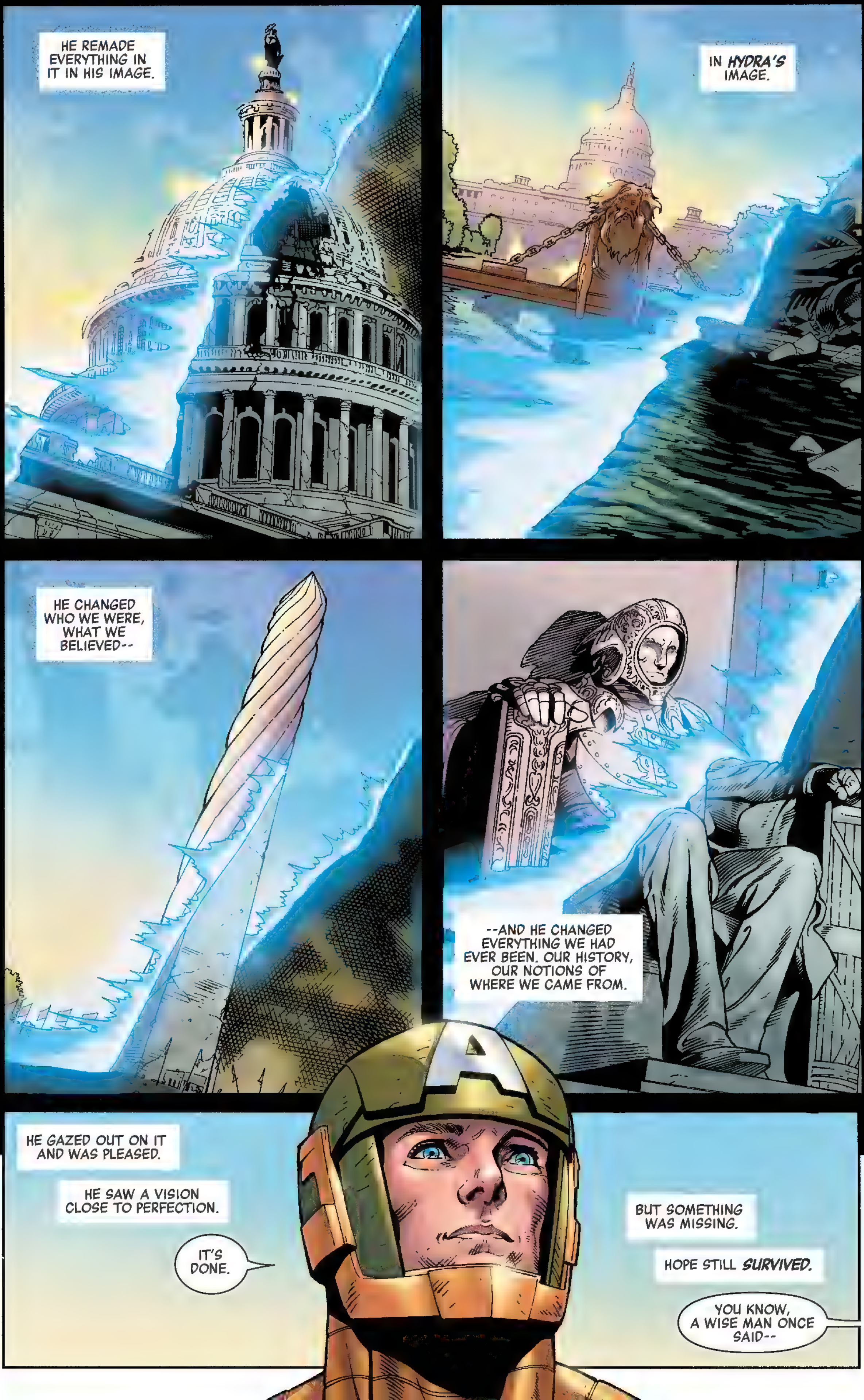

HYDRA IS GOING TO USE THE COSMIC CUBE TO RESTORE THE WORLD. TO FORGE IT INTO SOMETHING BETTER. SOMETHING *STRONGER.*
FREE OF ALL THE WEAKNESS AND CORRUPTION *YOU* INFECTED IT WITH. WE CAN *MAKE* SOMETHING TRULY GLORIOUS...
...AND WE CAN DO IT TOGETHER. IF YOU'LL JUST--
GONNA STOP YOU RIGHT THERE, BUB--
--I FEEL SAFE SAYIN' YOU AIN'T GONNA GET MANY TAKERS IN THIS CROWD.
LOGAN'S RIGHT. YOU SAY THE TIME FOR FIGHTING IS UP, BUT IT FEELS RIGHT ON TIME TO ME. JUST NEED TO HEAR THE WORDS, I GUESS.
YEAH, I'M ON IT...
THIS IS FOR NAT, YOU SON OF A BITCH.
AVENGERS--

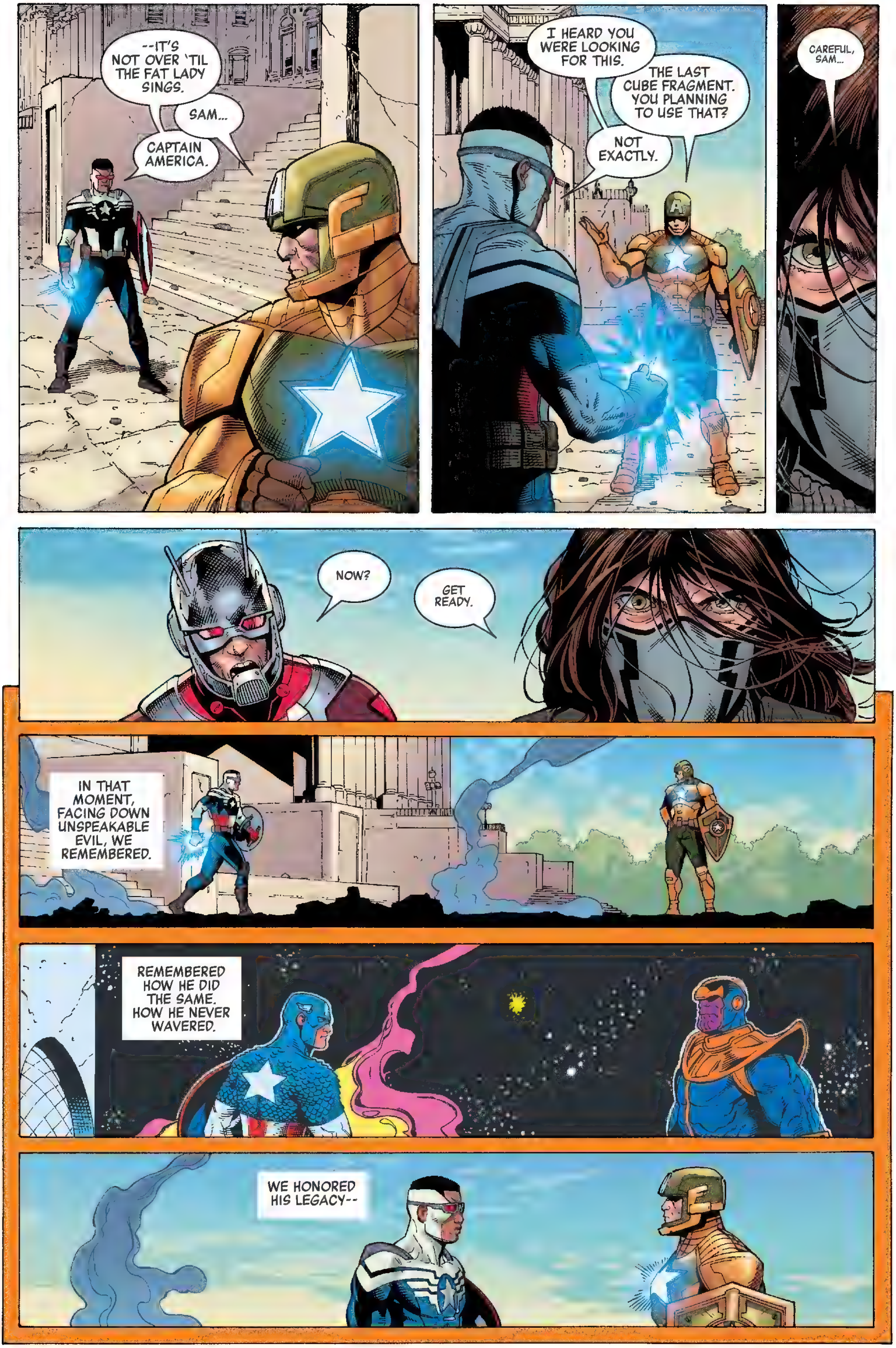

--ASSEMBLE!!!

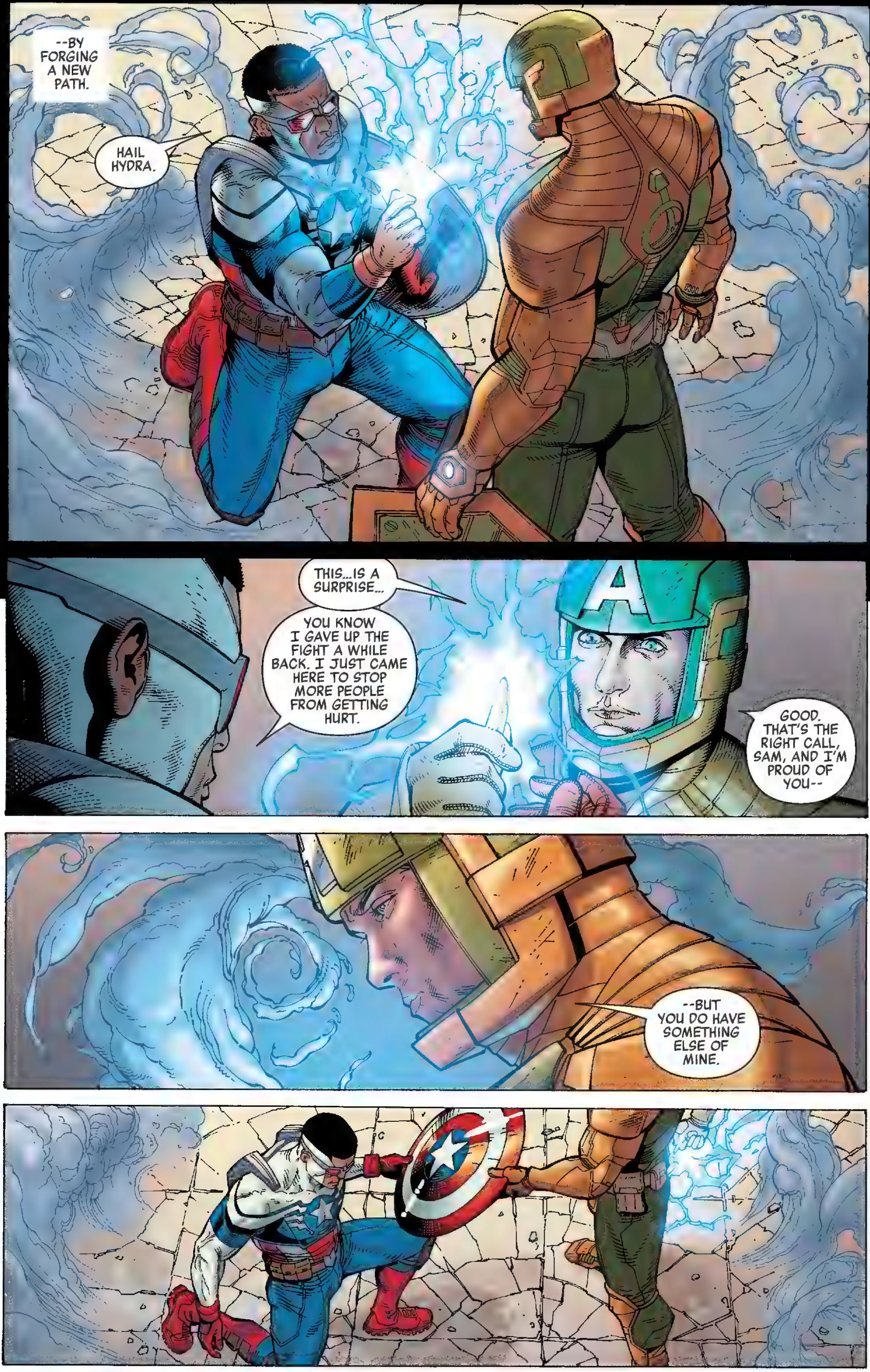

AND SO WE FOUGHT, UNITED AT LONG LAST.
WE FOUGHT WITH EVERYTHING WE HAD.
AS WE SWARMED AND PILED, AS WE CLAWED AND PUNCHED, WE ALREADY KNEW--
--WE DIDN'T STAND A CHANCE.

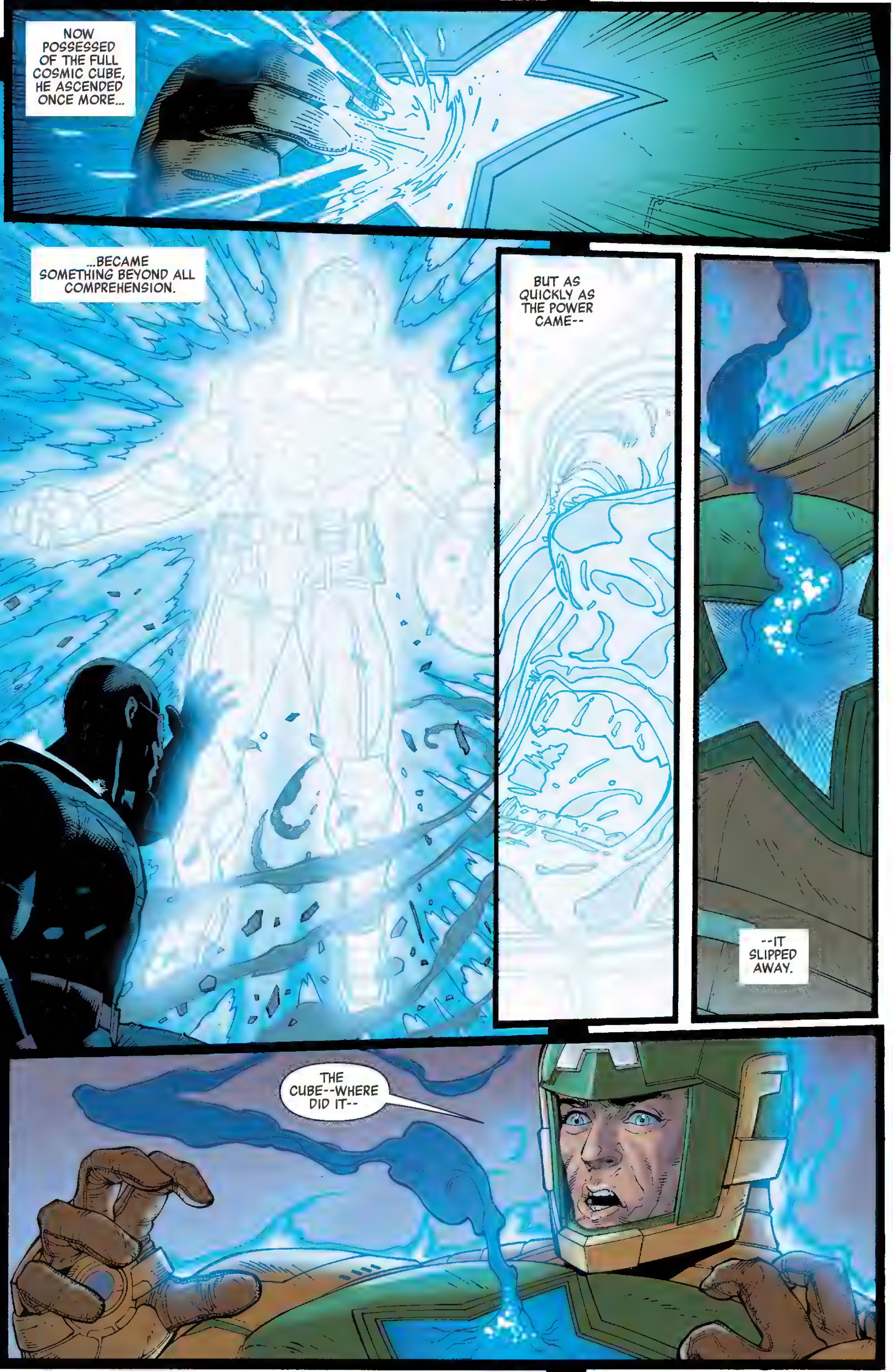

HIS HEART BEAT WITH THE POWER OF A GOD NOW.
REALITY ITSELF BENT TO HIS FURY.
HE OVERWHELMED US, AND WITH JUST A THOUGHT--
--HE WIPED EVEN THE MEMORY OF US AWAY, LIKE THE SAND AND TIDE.

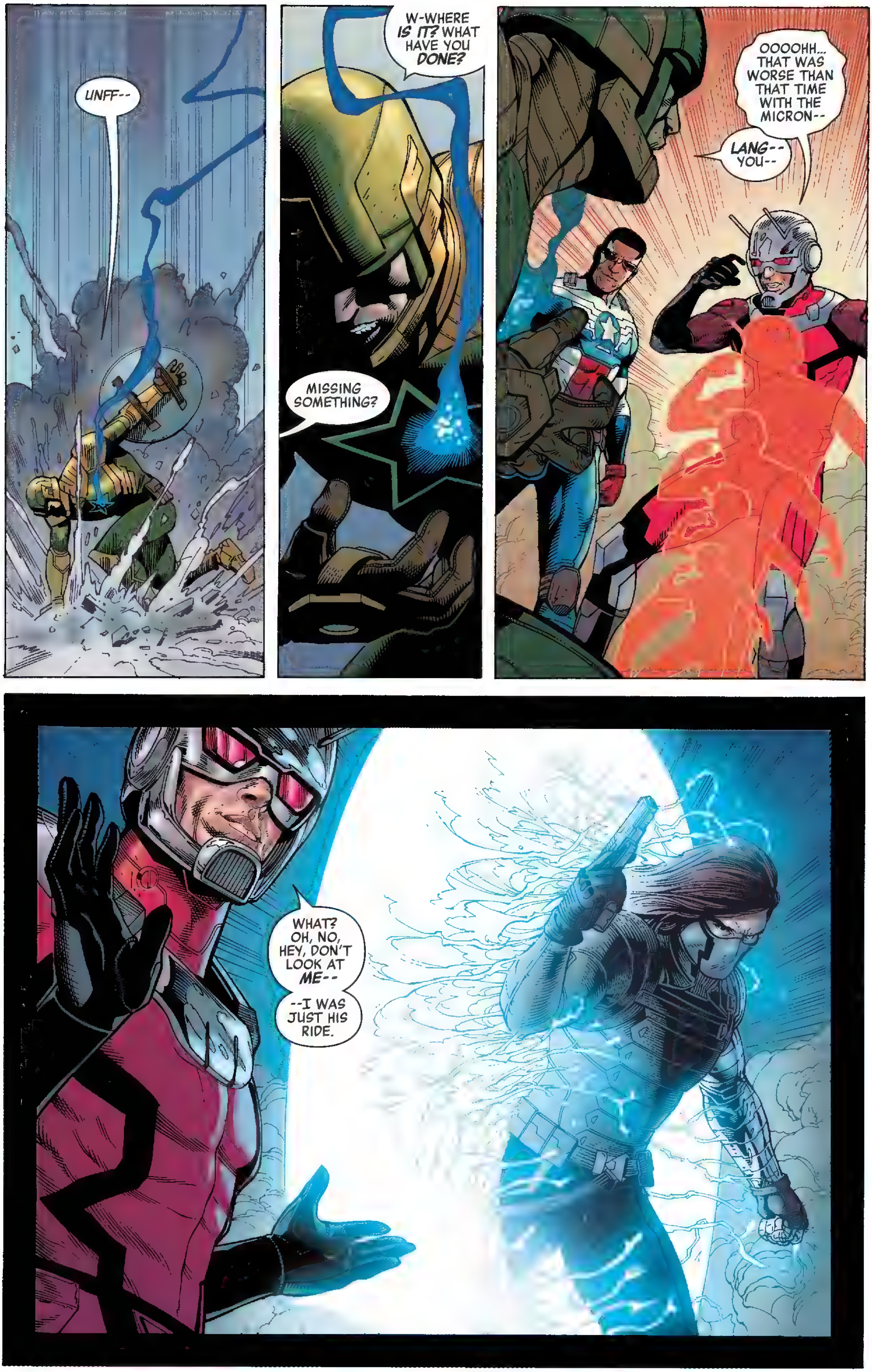

DAILY BUGLE
NEW YORK'S FINEST DAILY NEWSPAPER
HYDRA ASTRONAUTS RETURN FROM SPACE WITH STRANGE POWERS
NEW YORK BULLETI
MUTANT REVOLUTIONARIE EXECUTED BY STATE
NEW YOR BULLETIN
HYDRA SEMBLE THE AVENGER
DAILY
HYDRA APPROVED
HYDRA'S GEN LY ALTERED SPIDERS YI SUPER-POWERE RESULTS
THE WORLD WAS HIS NOW.

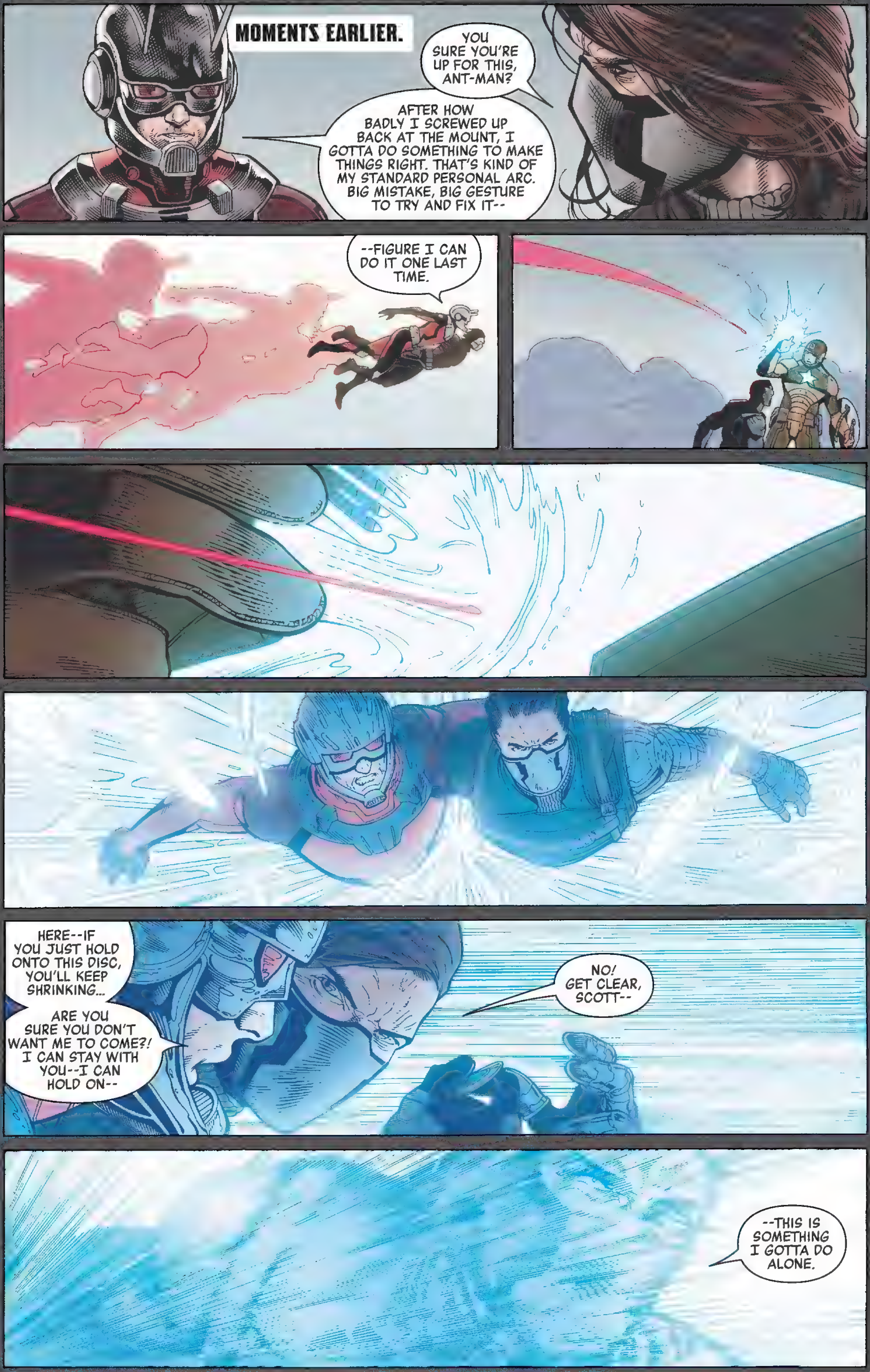

HE REMADE EVERYTHING IN IT IN HIS IMAGE.
IN *HYDRA'S* IMAGE.
HE CHANGED WHO WE WERE, WHAT WE BELIEVED--
--AND HE CHANGED EVERYTHING WE HAD EVER BEEN. OUR HISTORY, OUR NOTIONS OF WHERE WE CAME FROM.
HE GAZED OUT ON IT AND WAS PLEASED.
HE SAW A VISION CLOSE TO PERFECTION.
IT'S DONE.
BUT SOMETHING WAS MISSING.
HOPE STILL ***SURVIVED.***
YOU KNOW, A WISE MAN ONCE SAID--

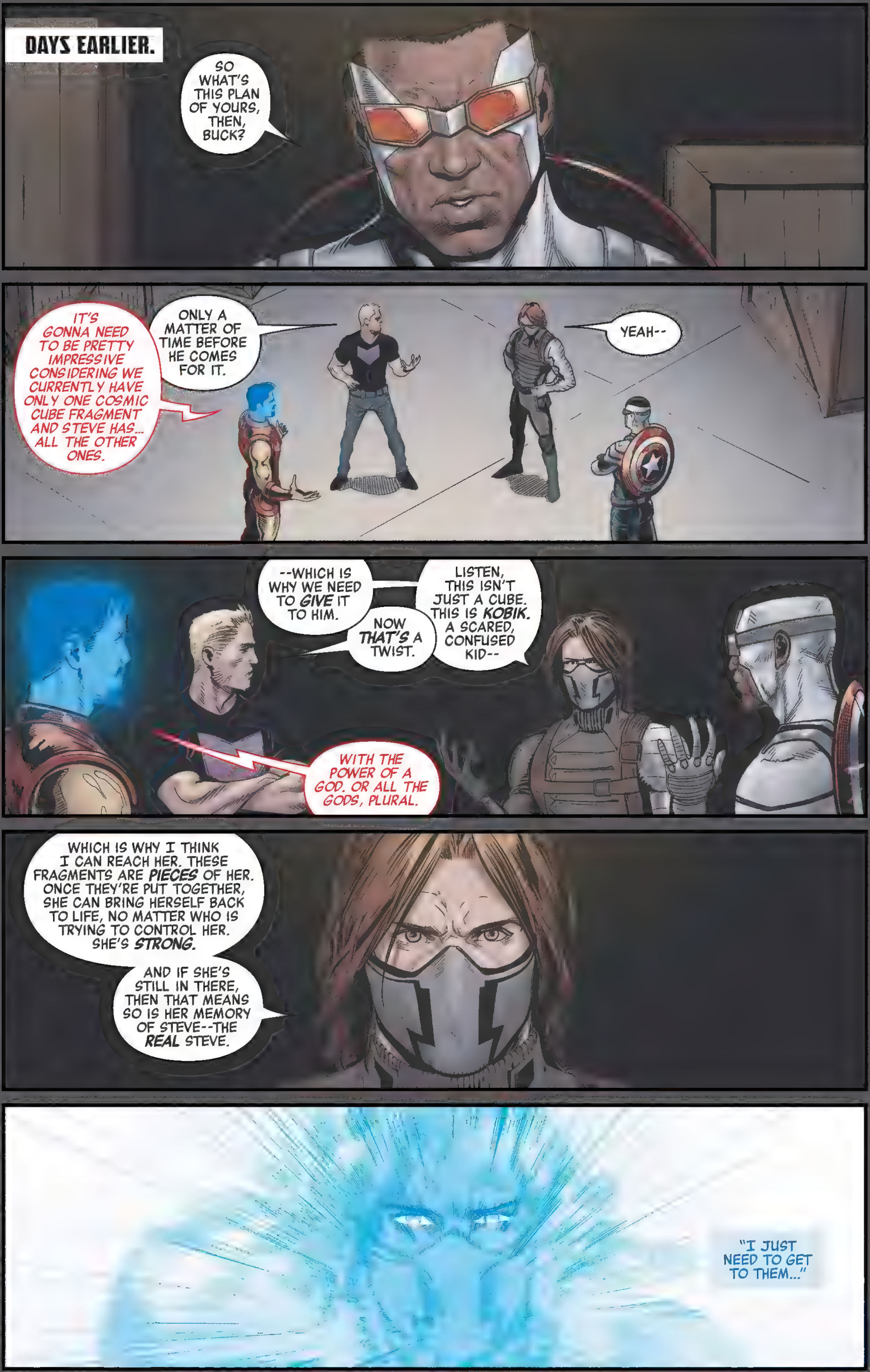

--IT'S NOT OVER 'TIL THE FAT LADY SINGS.
SAM...
CAPTAIN AMERICA.
I HEARD YOU WERE LOOKING FOR THIS.
THE LAST CUBE FRAGMENT. YOU PLANNING TO USE THAT?
NOT EXACTLY.
CAREFUL, SAM...
NOW?
GET READY.
IN THAT MOMENT, FACING DOWN UNSPEAKABLE EVIL, WE REMEMBERED.
REMEMBERED HOW HE DID THE SAME. HOW HE NEVER WAVERED.
WE HONORED HIS LEGACY--

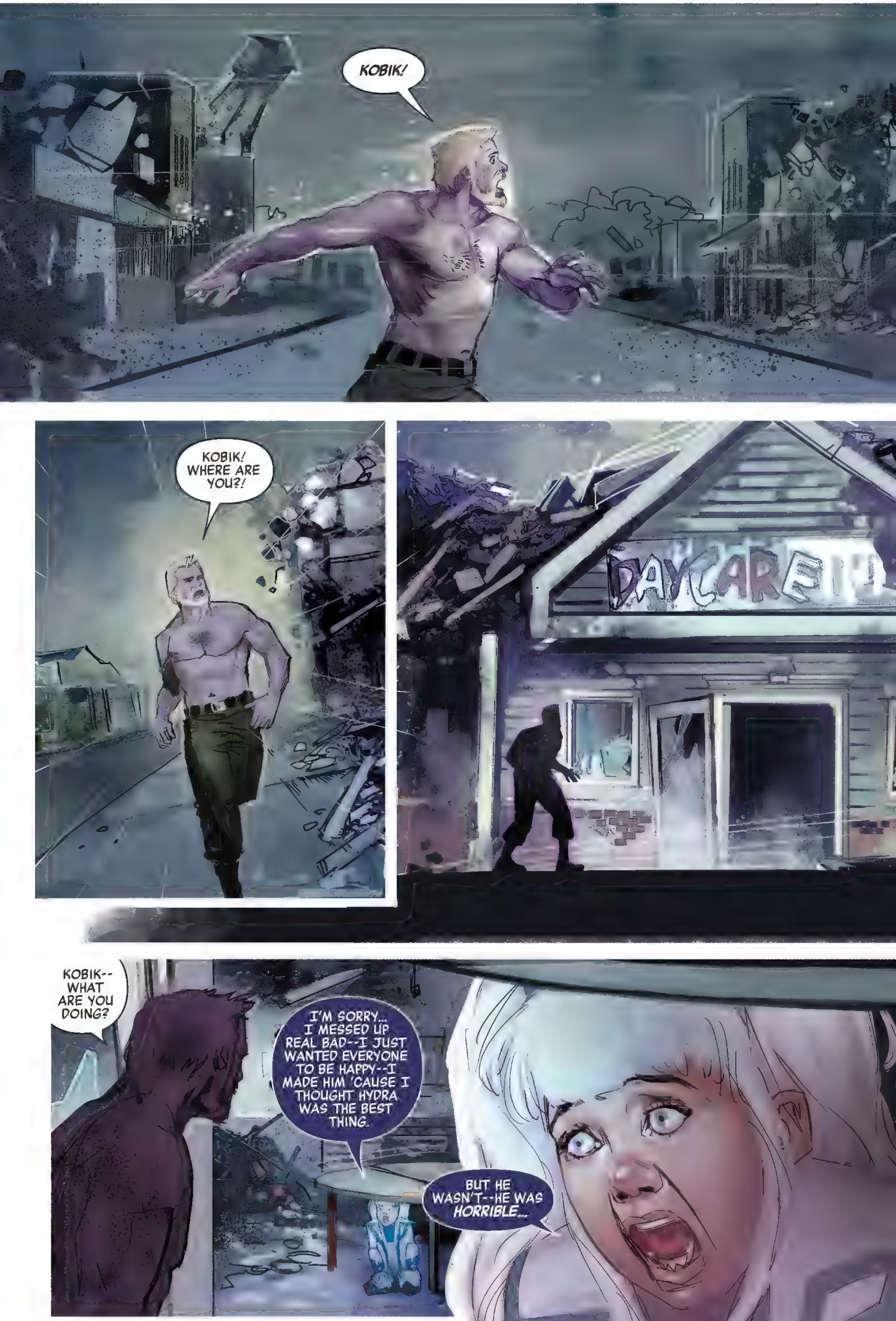

--BY FORGING A NEW PATH.
HAIL HYDRA.
THIS...IS A SURPRISE...
YOU KNOW I GAVE UP THE FIGHT A WHILE BACK. I JUST CAME HERE TO STOP MORE PEOPLE FROM GETTING HURT.
GOOD. THAT'S THE RIGHT CALL, SAM, AND I'M PROUD OF YOU--
--BUT YOU DO HAVE SOMETHING ELSE OF MINE.

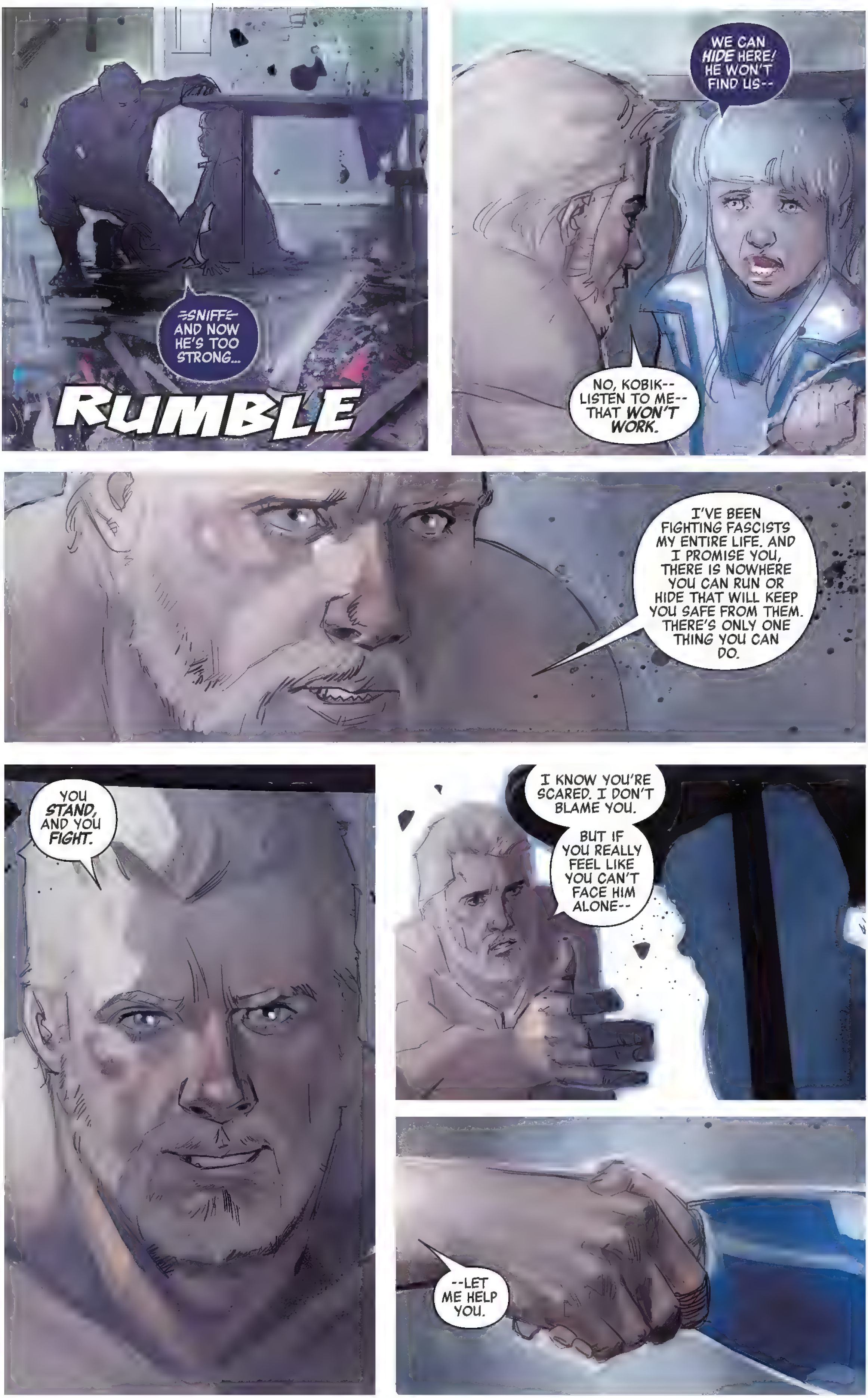

NOW POSSESSED OF THE FULL COSMIC CUBE, HE ASCENDED ONCE MORE...
...BECAME SOMETHING BEYOND ALL COMPREHENSION.
BUT AS QUICKLY AS THE POWER CAME--
--IT SLIPPED AWAY.
THE CUBE--WHERE DID IT--

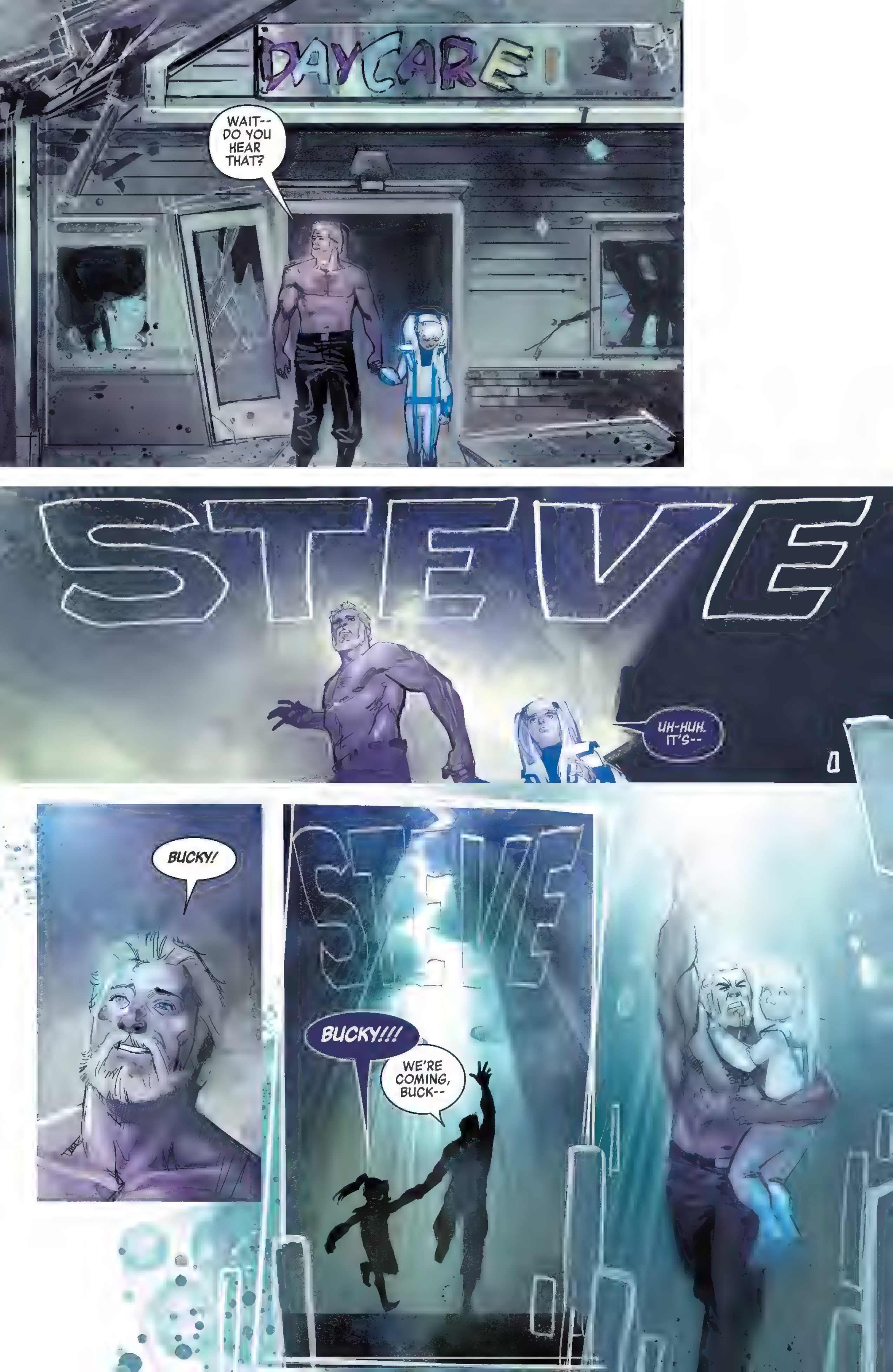

UNFF--
W-WHERE *IS IT?* WHAT HAVE YOU *DONE?*
MISSING SOMETHING?
OOOOHH... THAT WAS WORSE THAN THAT TIME WITH THE MICRON--
*LANG--* YOU--
WHAT? OH, NO, HEY, DON'T LOOK AT *ME--*
--I WAS JUST HIS RIDE.

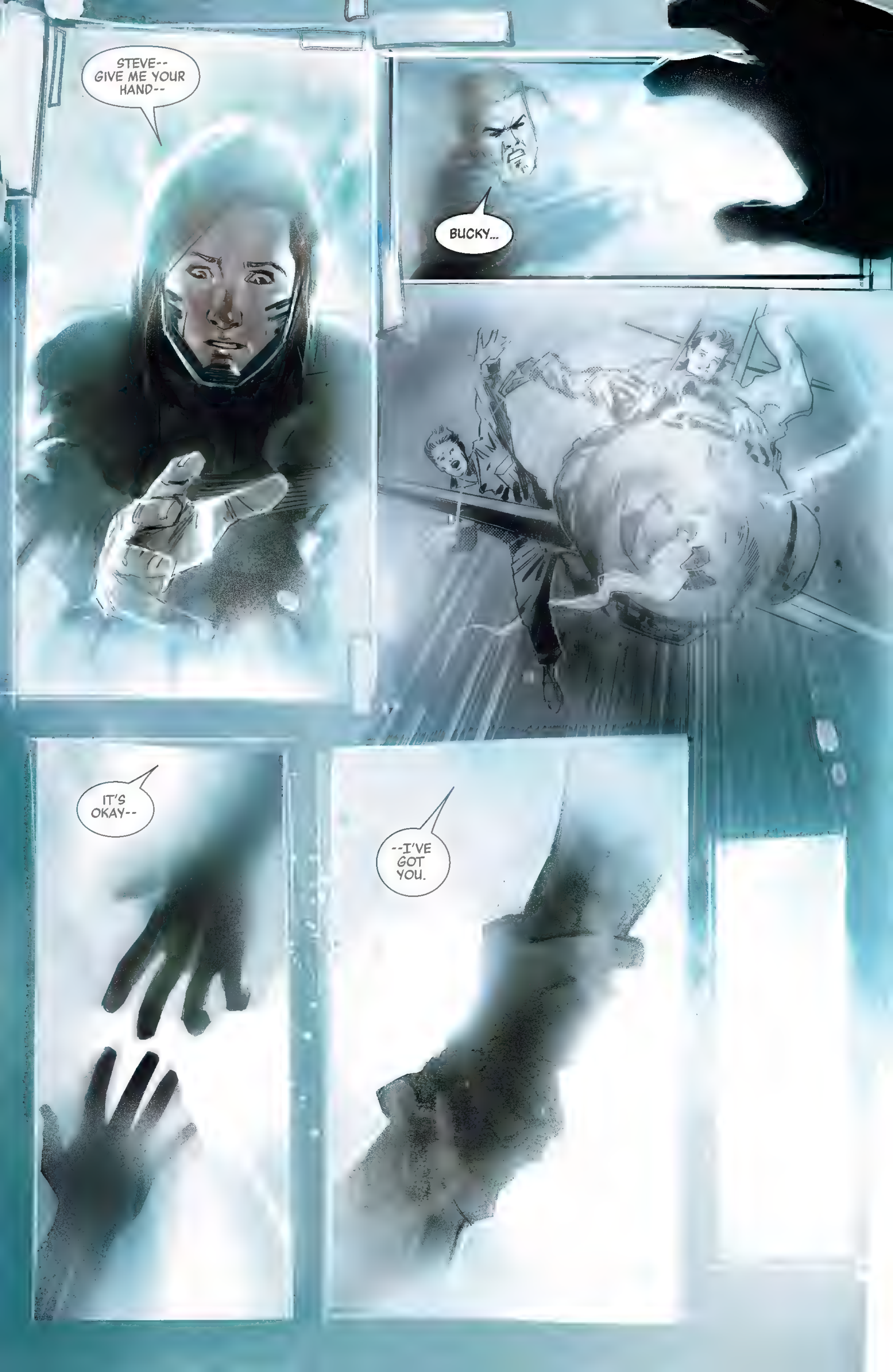

MOMENTS EARLIER.
YOU SURE YOU'RE UP FOR THIS, ANT-MAN?
AFTER HOW BADLY I SCREWED UP BACK AT THE MOUNT, I GOTTA DO SOMETHING TO MAKE THINGS RIGHT. THAT'S KIND OF MY STANDARD PERSONAL ARC. BIG MISTAKE, BIG GESTURE TO TRY AND FIX IT--
--FIGURE I CAN DO IT ONE LAST TIME.
HERE--IF YOU JUST HOLD ONTO THIS DISC, YOU'LL KEEP SHRINKING...
ARE YOU SURE YOU DON'T WANT ME TO COME?! I CAN STAY WITH YOU--I CAN HOLD ON--
NO! GET CLEAR, SCOTT--
--THIS IS SOMETHING I GOTTA DO ALONE.

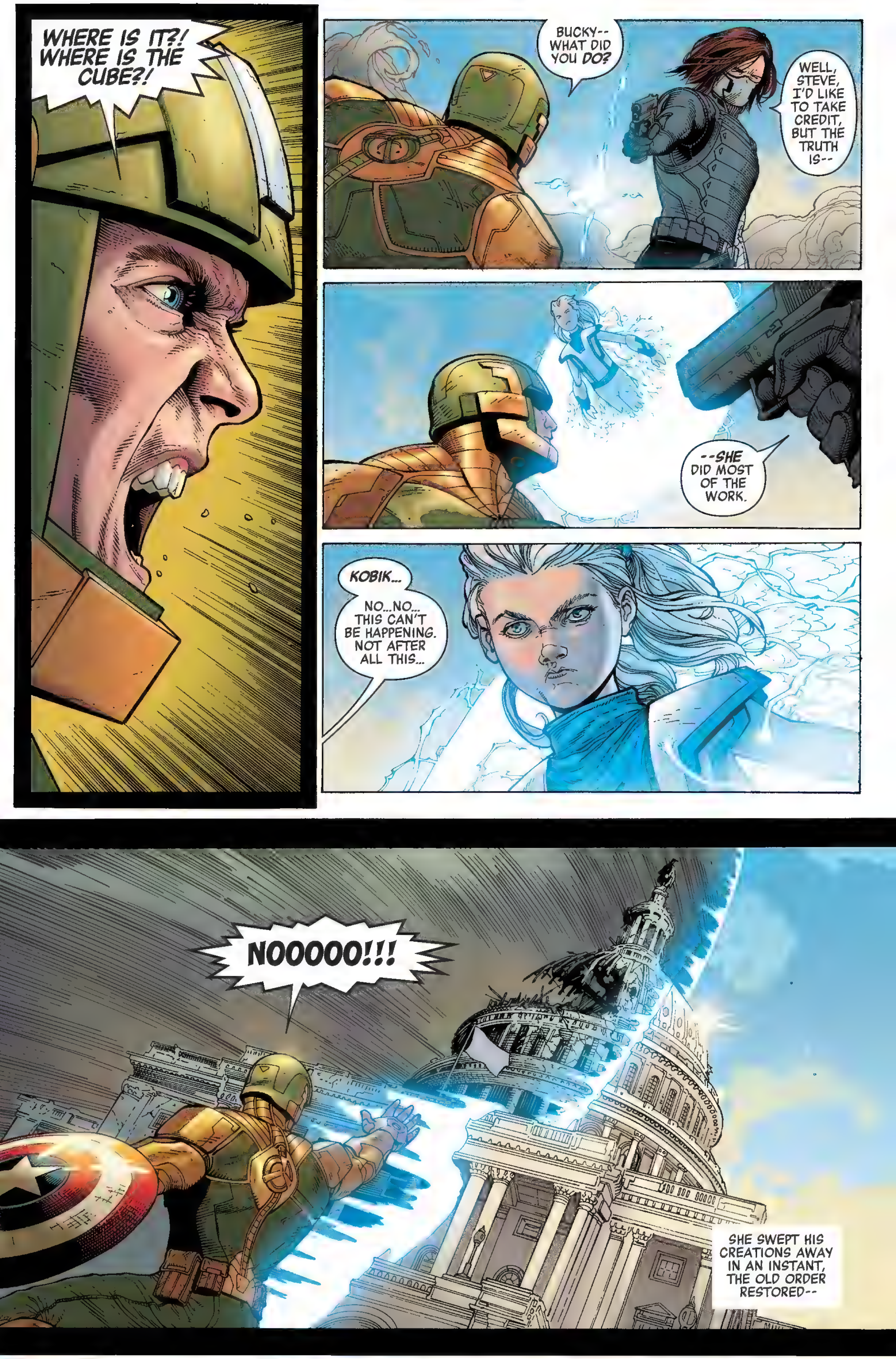

DAYS EARLIER.
SO WHAT'S THIS PLAN OF YOURS, THEN, BUCK?
IT'S GONNA NEED TO BE PRETTY IMPRESSIVE CONSIDERING WE CURRENTLY HAVE ONLY ONE COSMIC CUBE FRAGMENT AND STEVE HAS... ALL THE OTHER ONES.
ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE HE COMES FOR IT.
YEAH--
--WHICH IS WHY WE NEED TO *GIVE* IT TO HIM.
NOW *THAT'S* A TWIST.
LISTEN, THIS ISN'T JUST A CUBE. THIS IS *KOBIK.* A SCARED, CONFUSED KID--
WITH THE POWER OF A GOD. OR ALL THE GODS, PLURAL.
WHICH IS WHY I THINK I CAN REACH HER. THESE FRAGMENTS ARE *PIECES* OF HER. ONCE THEY'RE PUT TOGETHER, SHE CAN BRING HERSELF BACK TO LIFE, NO MATTER WHO IS TRYING TO CONTROL HER. SHE'S *STRONG.*
AND IF SHE'S STILL IN THERE, THEN THAT MEANS SO IS HER MEMORY OF STEVE--THE *REAL* STEVE.
"I JUST NEED TO GET TO THEM..."

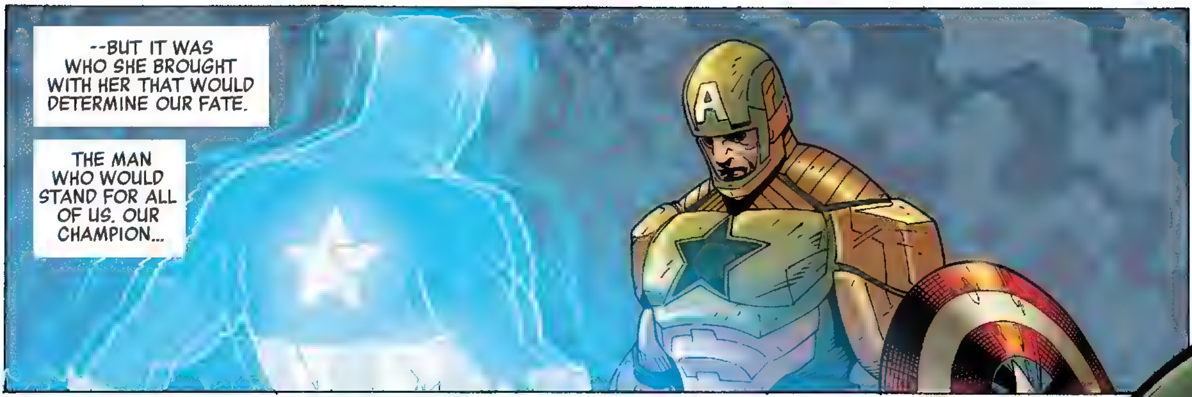

KOBIK!
KOBIK! WHERE ARE YOU?!
DAYCARE
KOBIK--WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
I'M SORRY... I MESSED UP REAL BAD--I JUST WANTED EVERYONE TO BE HAPPY--I MADE HIM 'CAUSE I THOUGHT HYDRA WAS THE BEST THING.
BUT HE WASN'T--HE WAS *HORRIBLE*...

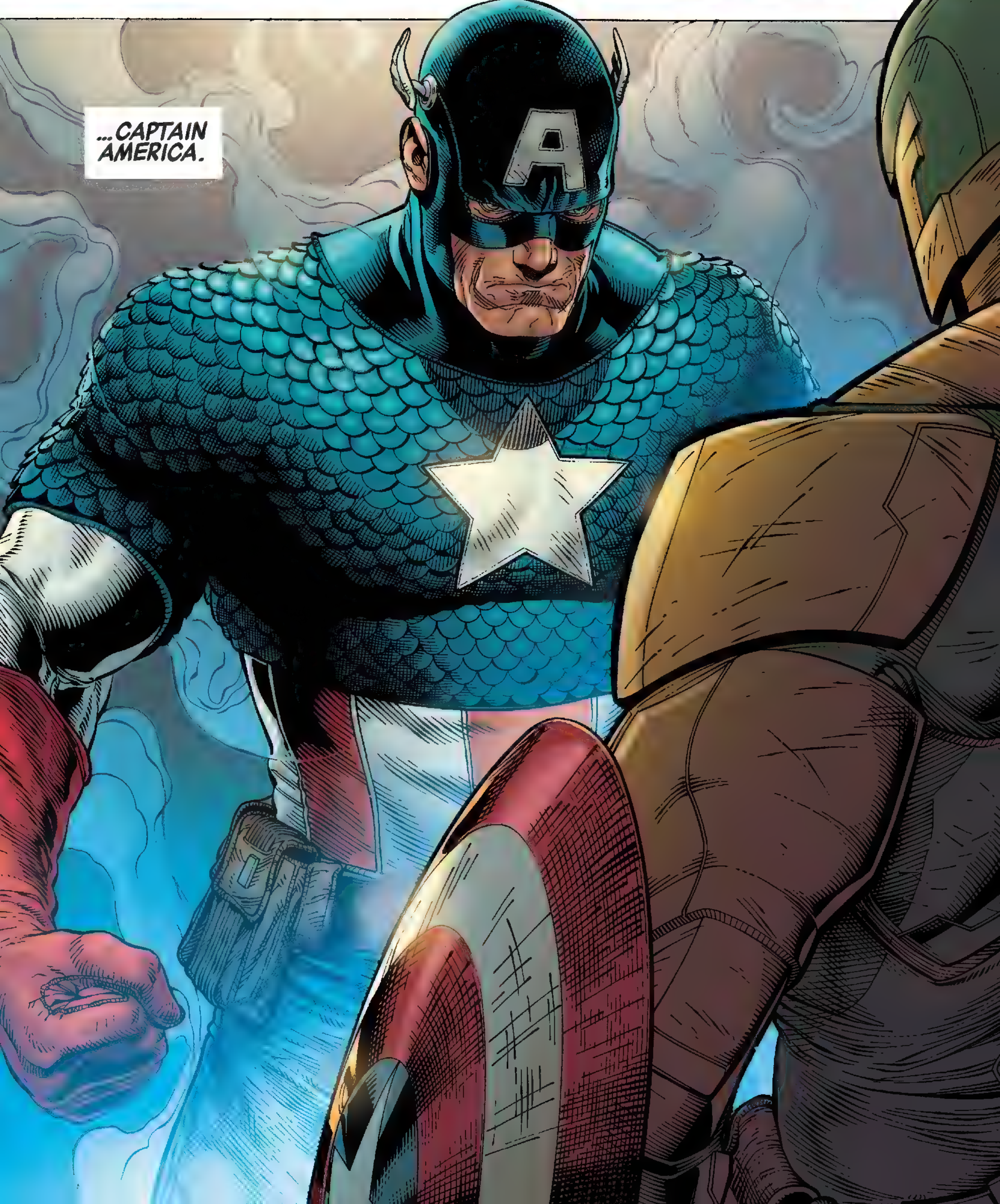

=SNIFF= AND NOW HE'S TOO STRONG...
RUMBLE
WE CAN *HIDE* HERE! HE WON'T FIND US--
NO, KOBIK-- LISTEN TO ME-- THAT *WON'T WORK.*
I'VE BEEN FIGHTING FASCISTS MY ENTIRE LIFE. AND I PROMISE YOU, THERE IS NOWHERE YOU CAN RUN OR HIDE THAT WILL KEEP YOU SAFE FROM THEM. THERE'S ONLY ONE THING YOU CAN DO.
YOU *STAND,* AND YOU *FIGHT.*
I KNOW YOU'RE SCARED. I DON'T BLAME YOU.
BUT IF YOU REALLY FEEL LIKE YOU CAN'T FACE HIM ALONE--
--LET ME HELP YOU.

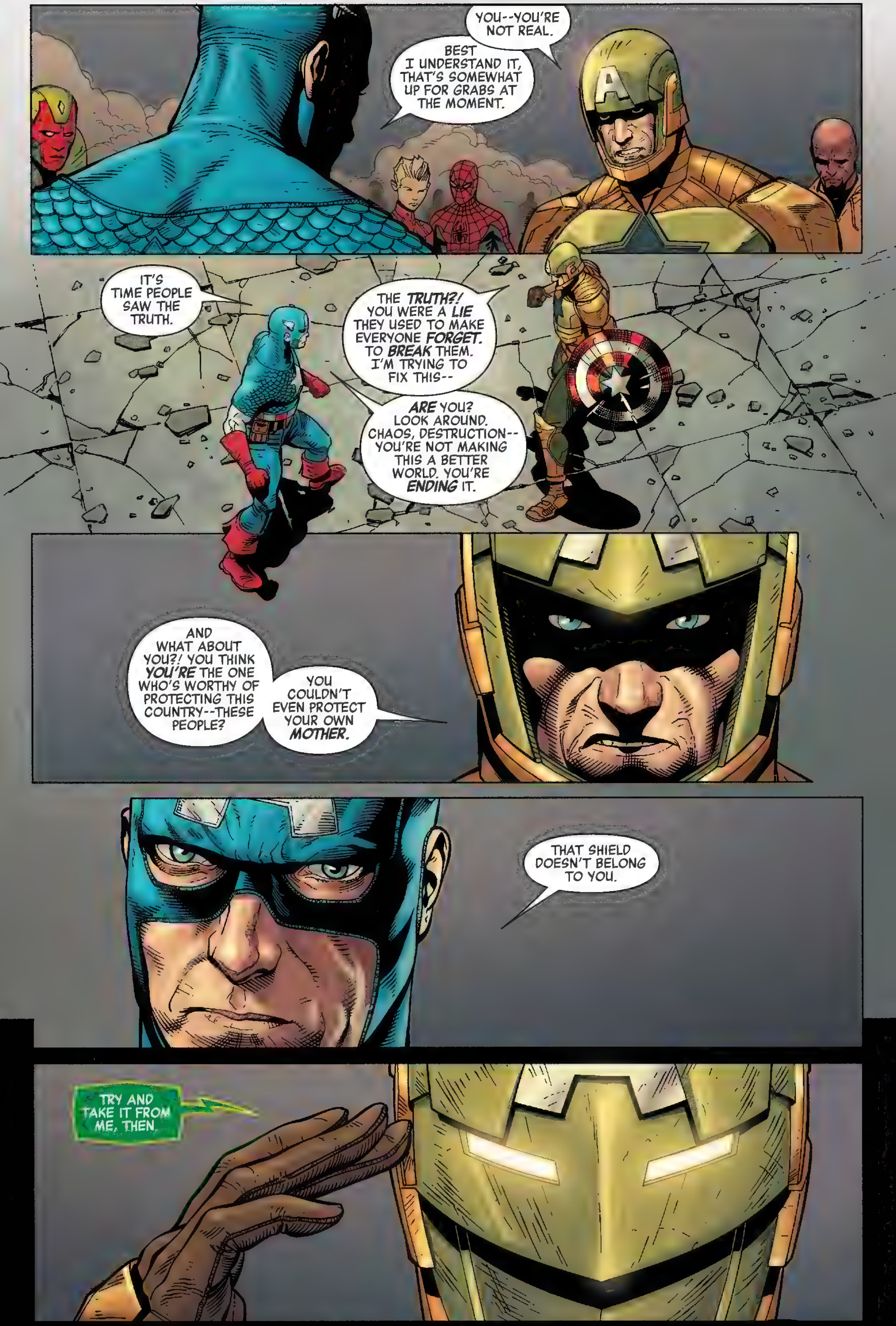

DAYCARE
WAIT--
DO YOU
HEAR
THAT?
STEVE
UH-HUH.
IT'S--
BUCKY!
STEVE
BUCKY!!!
WE'RE
COMING,
BUCK--

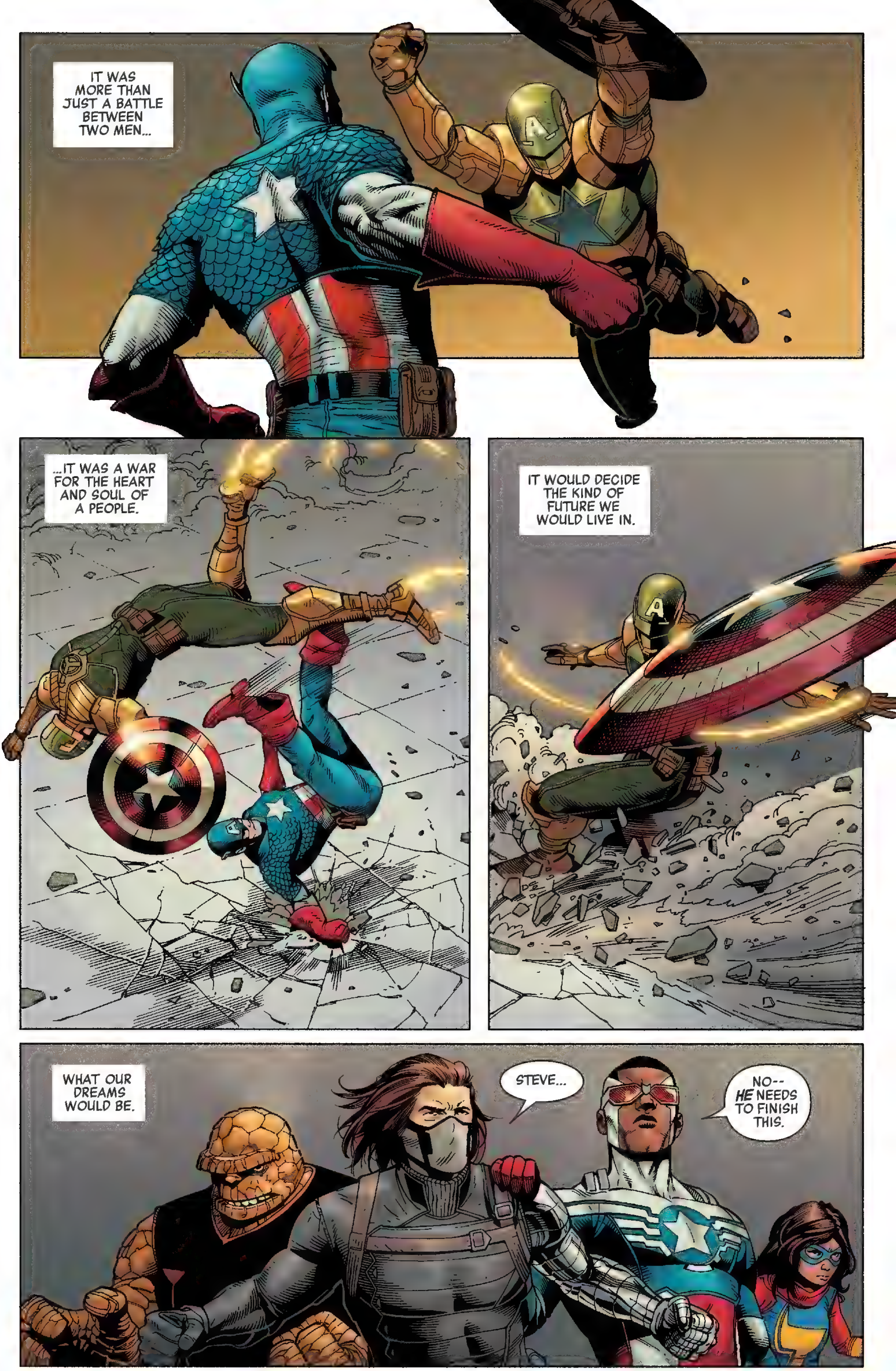

STEVE-- GIVE ME YOUR HAND--
BUCKY...
IT'S OKAY--
--I'VE GOT YOU.

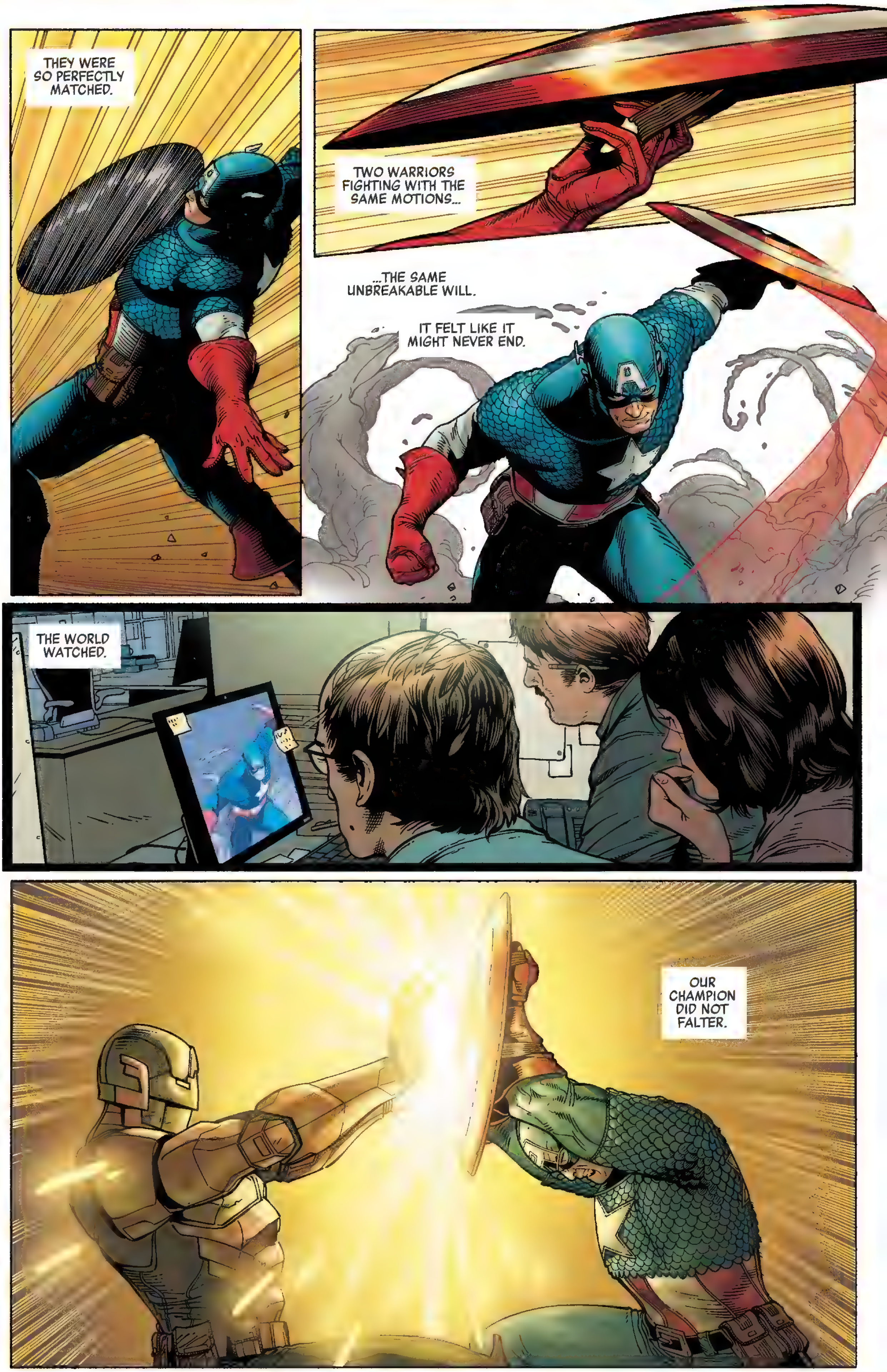

WHERE IS IT?! WHERE IS THE CUBE?!
BUCKY-- WHAT DID YOU DO?
WELL, STEVE, I'D LIKE TO TAKE CREDIT, BUT THE TRUTH IS--
--SHE DID MOST OF THE WORK.
KOBIK...
NO...NO... THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING. NOT AFTER ALL THIS...
NOOOOO!!!
SHE SWEPT HIS CREATIONS AWAY IN AN INSTANT, THE OLD ORDER RESTORED--

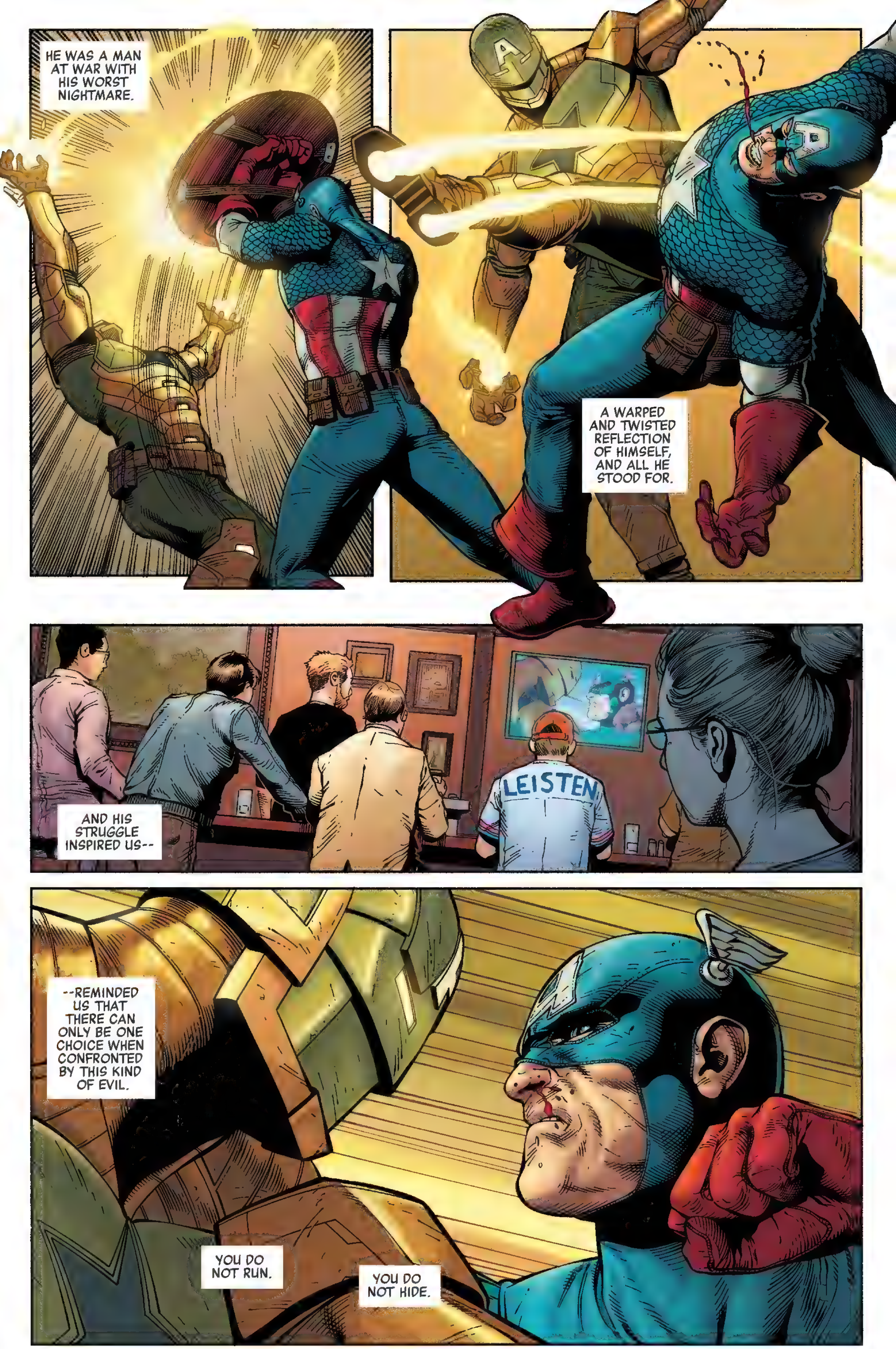

--BUT IT WAS WHO SHE BROUGHT WITH HER THAT WOULD DETERMINE OUR FATE.
THE MAN WHO WOULD STAND FOR ALL OF US. OUR CHAMPION...

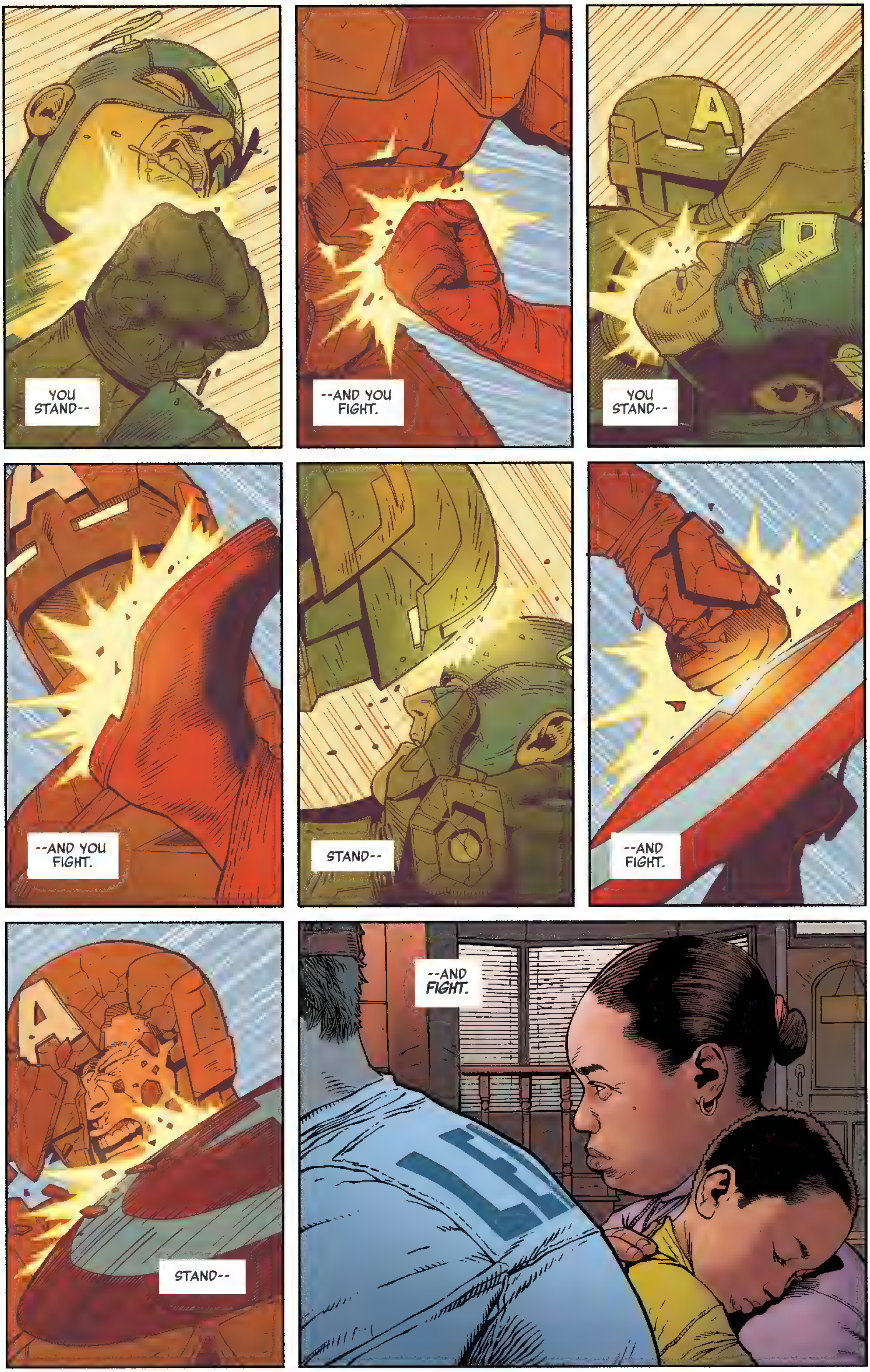

...CAPTAIN AMERICA.

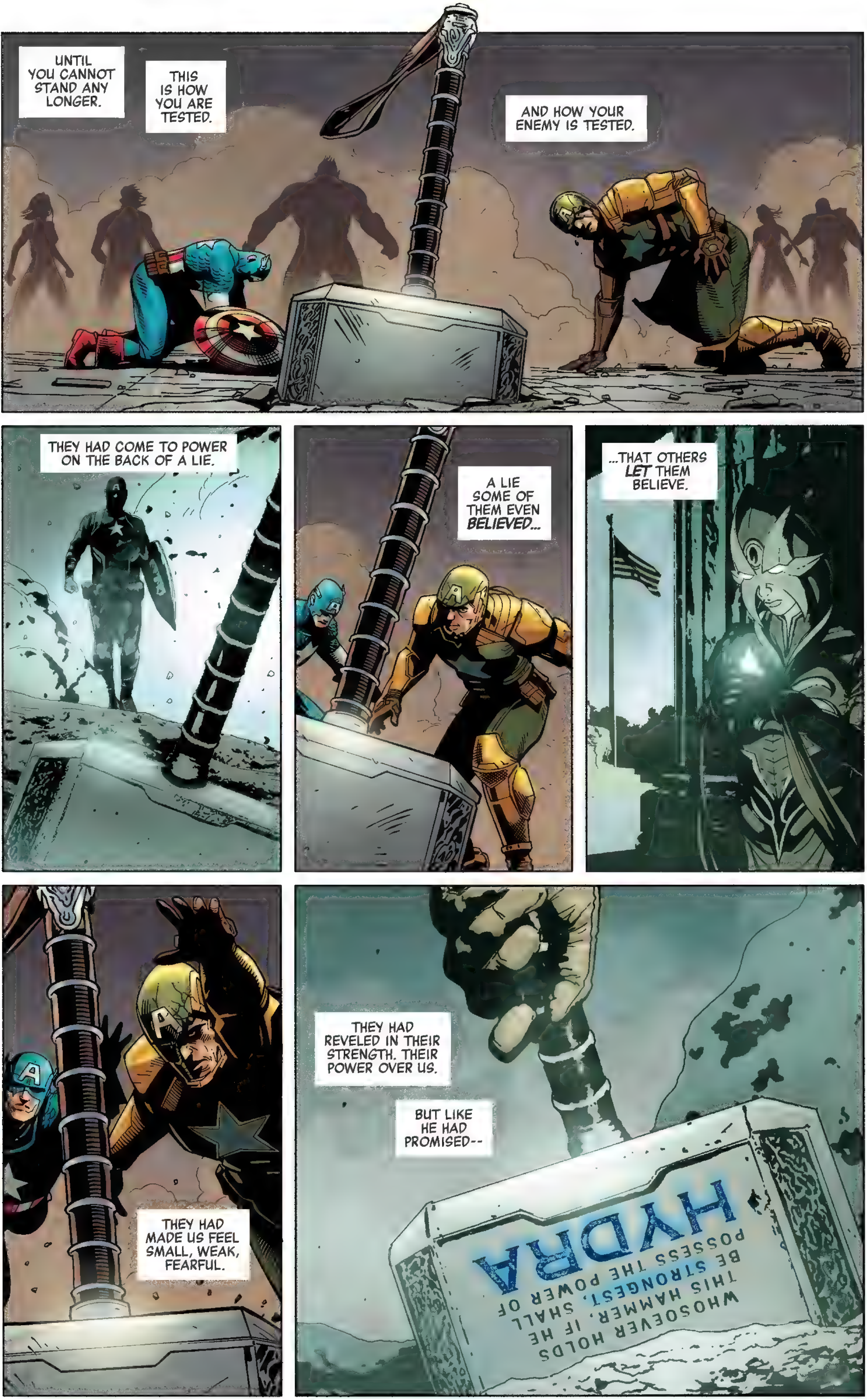

YOU--YOU'RE NOT REAL.
BEST I UNDERSTAND IT, THAT'S SOMEWHAT UP FOR GRABS AT THE MOMENT.
IT'S TIME PEOPLE SAW THE TRUTH.
THE *TRUTH?!* YOU WERE A *LIE* THEY USED TO MAKE EVERYONE *FORGET*. TO *BREAK* THEM. I'M TRYING TO FIX THIS--
*ARE* YOU? LOOK AROUND. CHAOS, DESTRUCTION-- YOU'RE NOT MAKING THIS A BETTER WORLD. YOU'RE *ENDING* IT.
AND WHAT ABOUT YOU?! YOU THINK *YOU'RE* THE ONE WHO'S WORTHY OF PROTECTING THIS COUNTRY--THESE PEOPLE?
YOU COULDN'T EVEN PROTECT YOUR OWN *MOTHER*.
THAT SHIELD DOESN'T BELONG TO YOU.
TRY AND TAKE IT FROM ME, THEN.

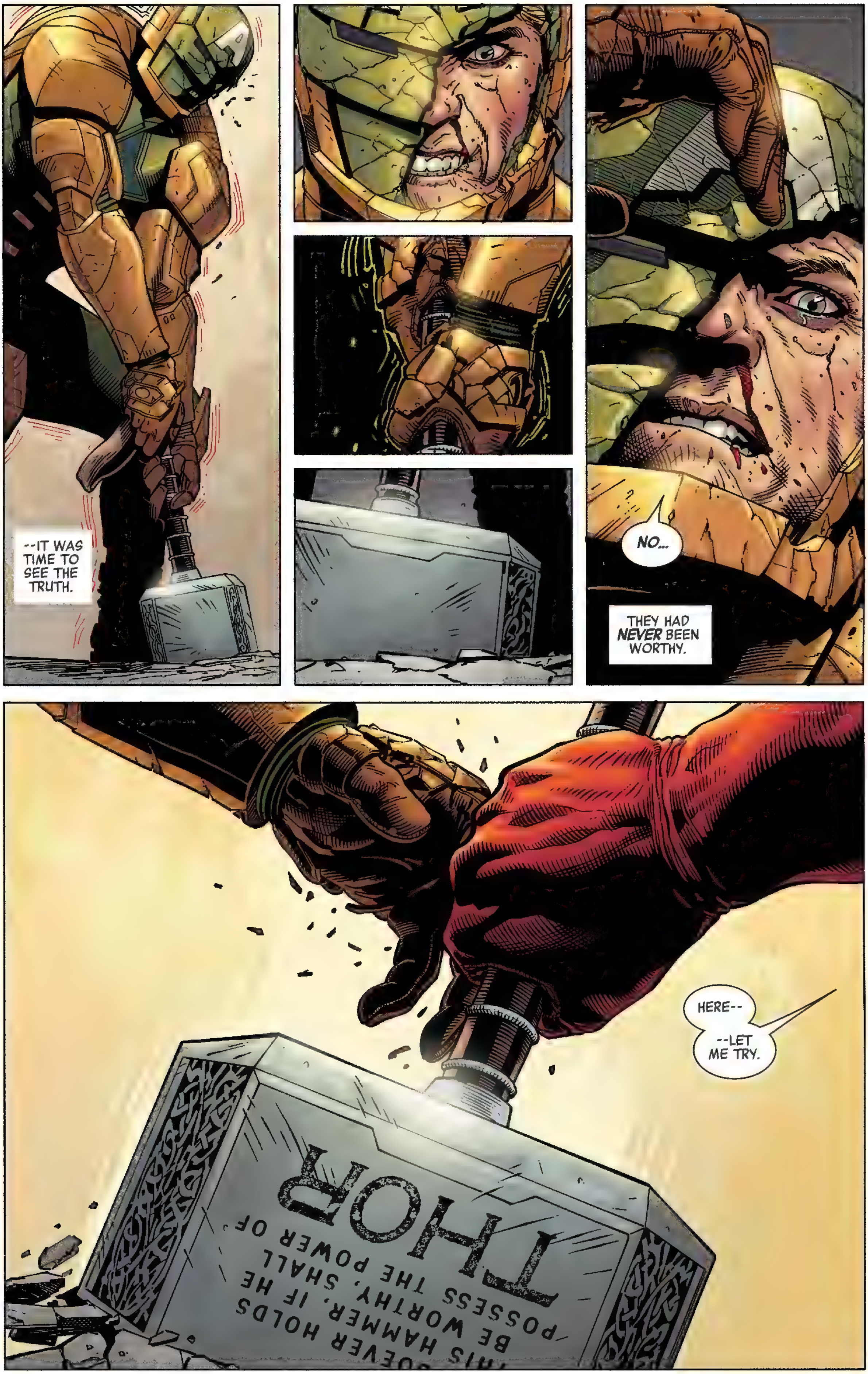

IT WAS MORE THAN JUST A BATTLE BETWEEN TWO MEN...
...IT WAS A WAR FOR THE HEART AND SOUL OF A PEOPLE.
IT WOULD DECIDE THE KIND OF FUTURE WE WOULD LIVE IN.
WHAT OUR DREAMS WOULD BE.
STEVE...
NO-- *HE* NEEDS TO FINISH THIS.

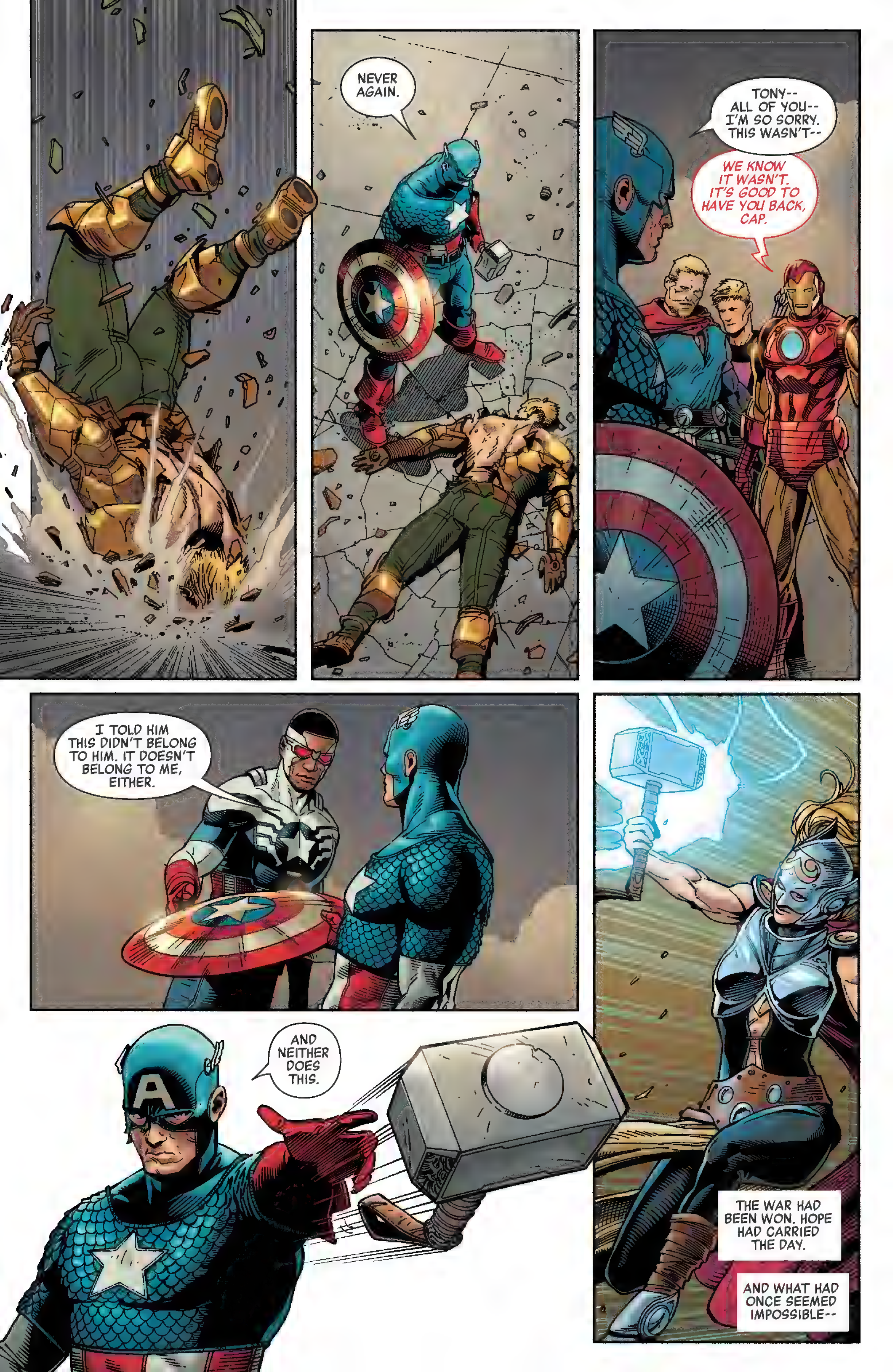

THEY WERE SO PERFECTLY MATCHED.
TWO WARRIORS FIGHTING WITH THE SAME MOTIONS...
...THE SAME UNBREAKABLE WILL.
IT FELT LIKE IT MIGHT NEVER END.
THE WORLD WATCHED.
OUR CHAMPION DID NOT FALTER.

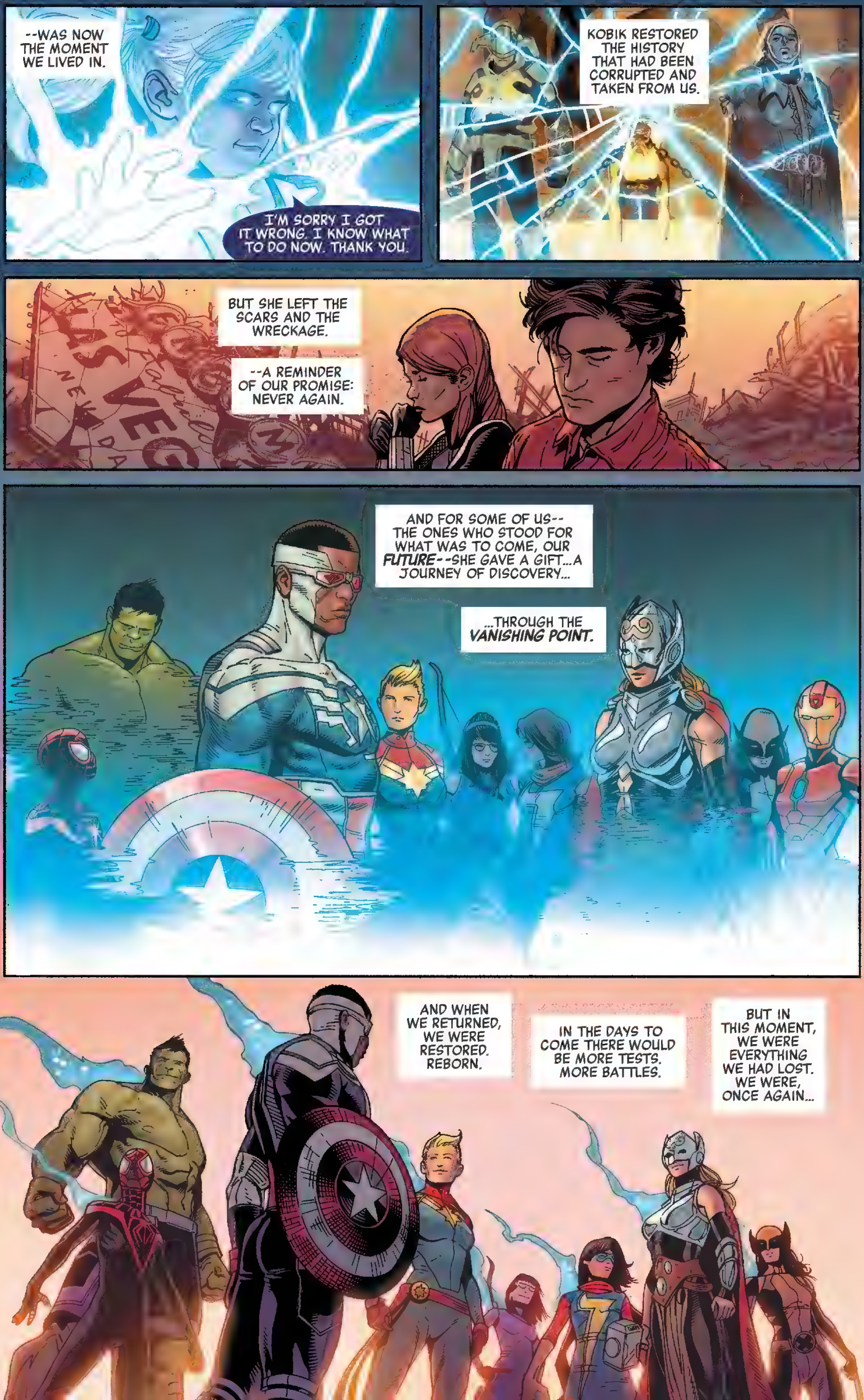

HE WAS A MAN AT WAR WITH HIS WORST NIGHTMARE.
A WARPED AND TWISTED REFLECTION OF HIMSELF, AND ALL HE STOOD FOR.
LEISTEN
AND HIS STRUGGLE INSPIRED US--
--REMINDED US THAT THERE CAN ONLY BE ONE CHOICE WHEN CONFRONTED BY THIS KIND OF EVIL.
YOU DO NOT RUN.
YOU DO NOT HIDE.


YOU STAND--
--AND YOU FIGHT.
YOU STAND--
--AND YOU FIGHT.
STAND--
--AND FIGHT.
STAND--
--AND FIGHT.

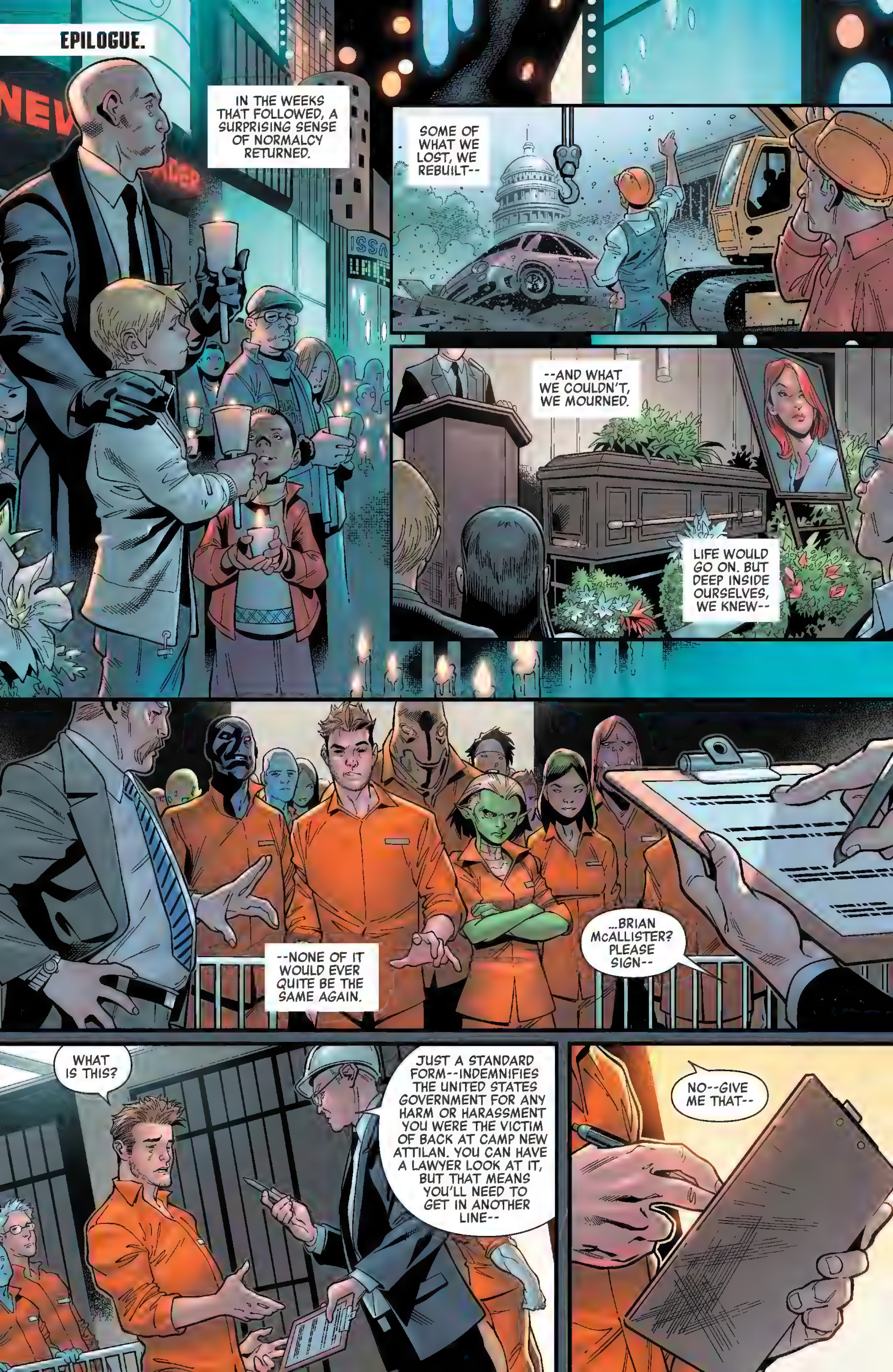

UNTIL YOU CANNOT STAND ANY LONGER.
THIS IS HOW YOU ARE TESTED.
AND HOW YOUR ENEMY IS TESTED.
THEY HAD COME TO POWER ON THE BACK OF A LIE.
A LIE SOME OF THEM EVEN *BELIEVED...*
...THAT OTHERS *LET* THEM BELIEVE.
THEY HAD MADE US FEEL SMALL, WEAK, FEARFUL.
THEY HAD REVELED IN THEIR STRENGTH. THEIR POWER OVER US.
BUT LIKE HE HAD PROMISED--
WHOSOEVER HOLDS THIS HAMMER, IF HE BE STRONGEST, SHALL POSSESS THE POWER OF HYDRA

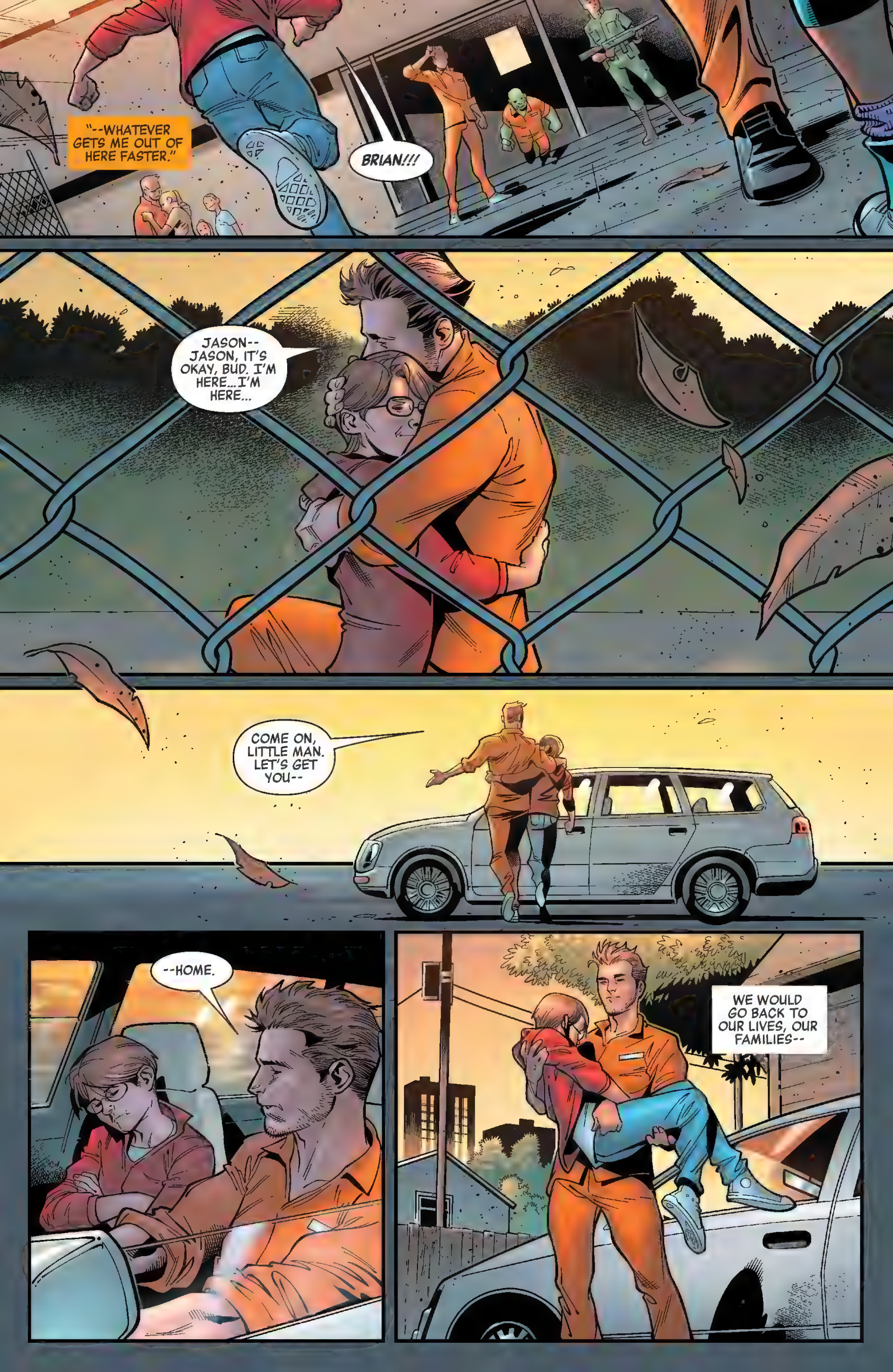

--IT WAS TIME TO SEE THE TRUTH.
NO...
THEY HAD NEVER BEEN WORTHY.
HERE--
--LET ME TRY.
OEVER HOLDS
HIS HAMMER, IF HE
BE WORTHY, SHALL
POSSESS THE POWER OF
THOR

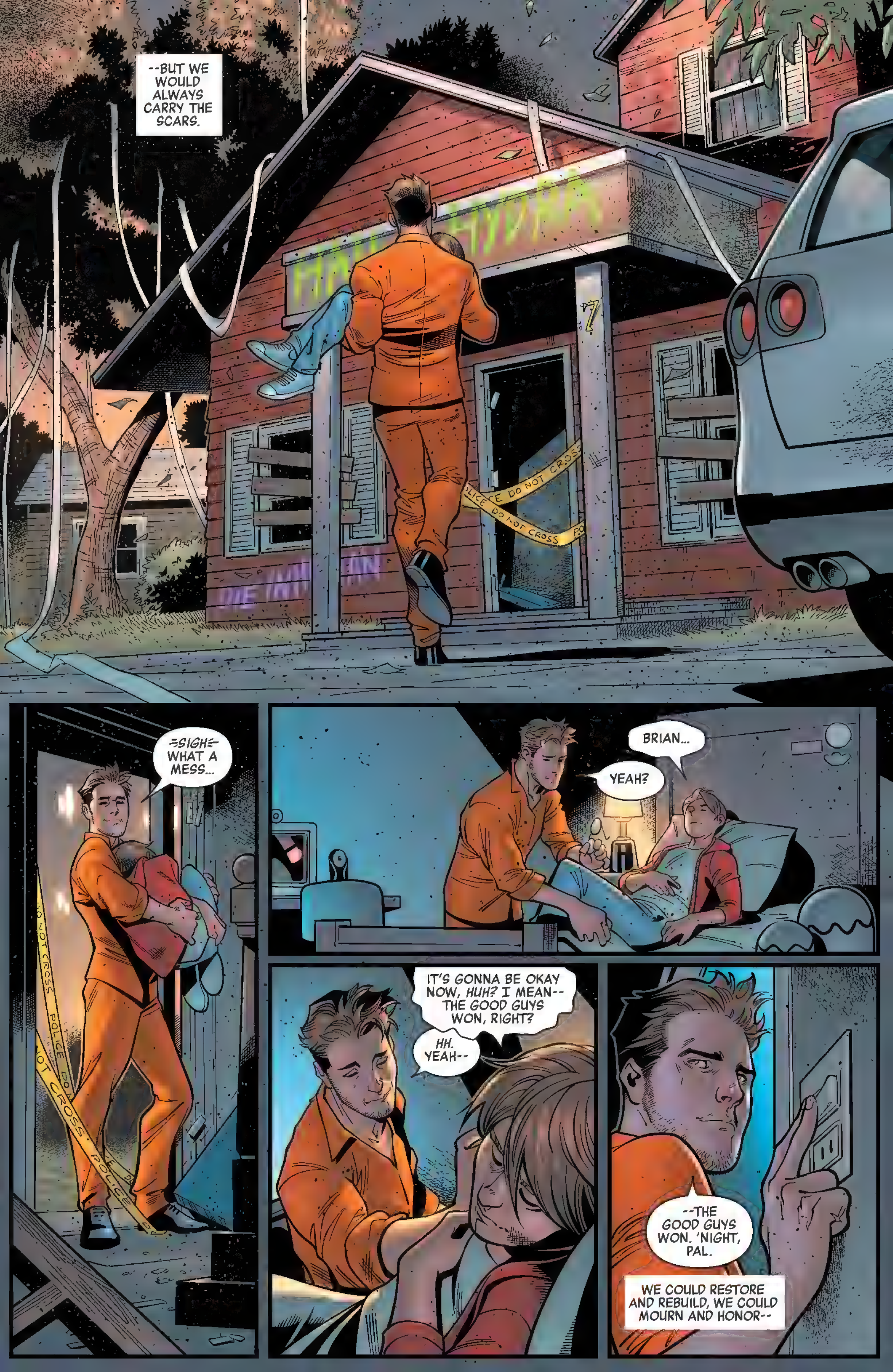

NEVER AGAIN.
TONY-- ALL OF YOU-- I'M SO SORRY. THIS WASN'T--
WE KNOW IT WASN'T. IT'S GOOD TO HAVE YOU BACK, CAP.
I TOLD HIM THIS DIDN'T BELONG TO HIM. IT DOESN'T BELONG TO ME, EITHER.
AND NEITHER DOES THIS.
THE WAR HAD BEEN WON. HOPE HAD CARRIED THE DAY.
AND WHAT HAD ONCE SEEMED IMPOSSIBLE--

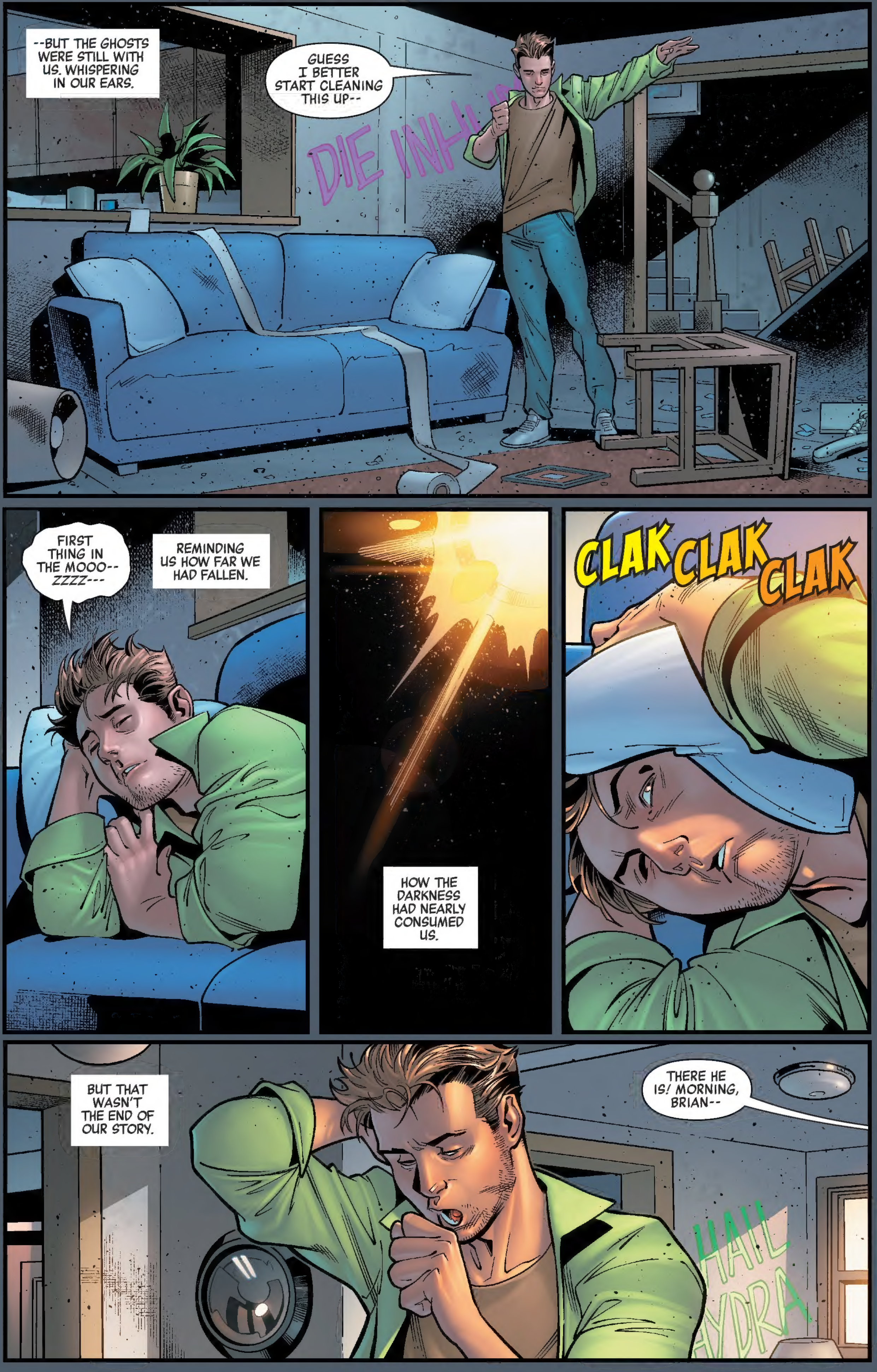

--WAS NOW THE MOMENT WE LIVED IN.
I'M SORRY I GOT IT WRONG. I KNOW WHAT TO DO NOW. THANK YOU.
KOBIK RESTORED THE HISTORY THAT HAD BEEN CORRUPTED AND TAKEN FROM US.
BUT SHE LEFT THE SCARS AND THE WRECKAGE.
--A REMINDER OF OUR PROMISE: NEVER AGAIN.
AND FOR SOME OF US--THE ONES WHO STOOD FOR WHAT WAS TO COME, OUR *FUTURE*--SHE GAVE A GIFT...A JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY...
...THROUGH THE *VANISHING POINT.*
AND WHEN WE RETURNED, WE WERE RESTORED. REBORN.
IN THE DAYS TO COME THERE WOULD BE MORE TESTS. MORE BATTLES.
BUT IN THIS MOMENT, WE WERE EVERYTHING WE HAD LOST. WE WERE, ONCE AGAIN...

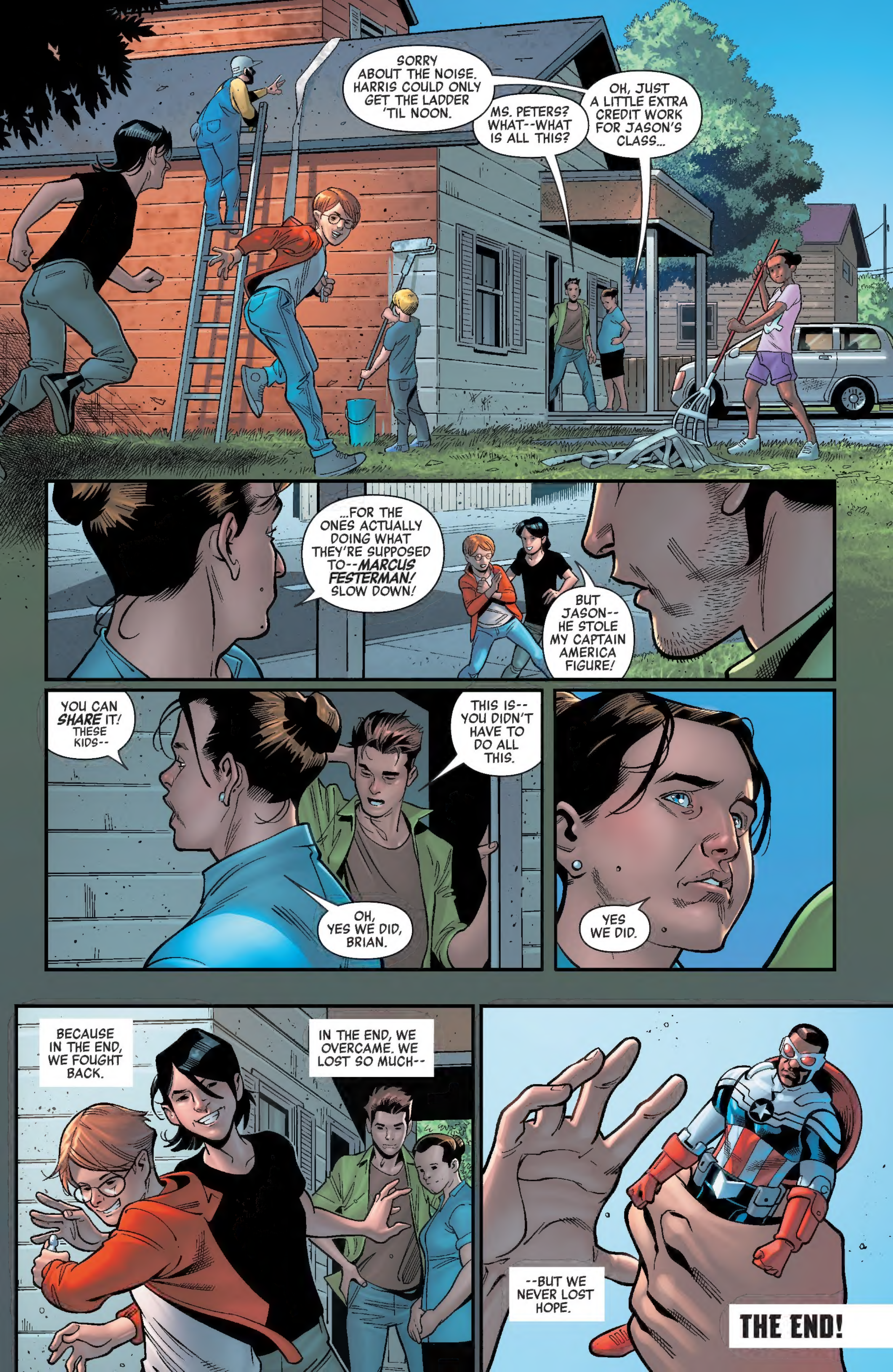
...EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES.


EPILOGUE.
IN THE WEEKS THAT FOLLOWED, A SURPRISING SENSE OF NORMALCY RETURNED.
SOME OF WHAT WE LOST, WE REBUILT--
--AND WHAT WE COULDN'T, WE MOURNED.
LIFE WOULD GO ON. BUT DEEP INSIDE OURSELVES, WE KNEW--
--NONE OF IT WOULD EVER QUITE BE THE SAME AGAIN.
...BRIAN McALLISTER? PLEASE SIGN--
WHAT IS THIS?
JUST A STANDARD FORM--INDEMNIFIES THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT FOR ANY HARM OR HARASSMENT YOU WERE THE VICTIM OF BACK AT CAMP NEW ATTILAN. YOU CAN HAVE A LAWYER LOOK AT IT, BUT THAT MEANS YOU'LL NEED TO GET IN ANOTHER LINE--
NO--GIVE ME THAT--


"--WHATEVER GETS ME OUT OF HERE FASTER."
BRIAN!!!
JASON-- JASON, IT'S OKAY, BUD. I'M HERE...I'M HERE...
COME ON, LITTLE MAN. LET'S GET YOU--
--HOME.
WE WOULD GO BACK TO OUR LIVES, OUR FAMILIES--

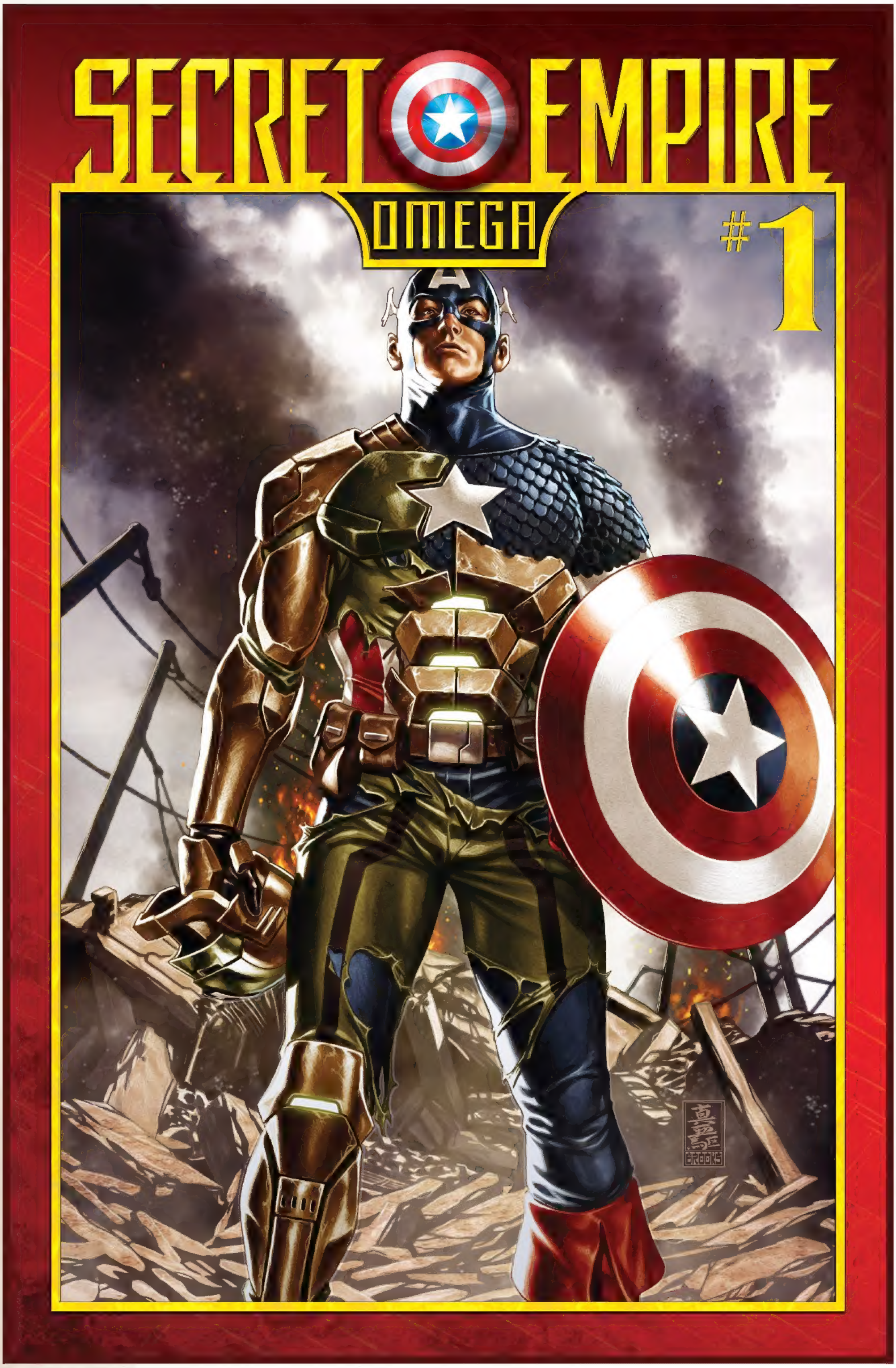

--BUT WE WOULD ALWAYS CARRY THE SCARS.
POLICE DO NOT CROSS
≈SIGH≈ WHAT A MESS...
BRIAN...
YEAH?
IT'S GONNA BE OKAY NOW, HUH? I MEAN-- THE GOOD GUYS WON, RIGHT?
HH. YEAH--
--THE GOOD GUYS WON. 'NIGHT, PAL.
WE COULD RESTORE AND REBUILD, WE COULD MOURN AND HONOR--


--BUT THE GHOSTS WERE STILL WITH US. WHISPERING IN OUR EARS.
GUESS I BETTER START CLEANING THIS UP--
DIE INHU
FIRST THING IN THE MOOO-- ZZZZ---
REMINDING US HOW FAR WE HAD FALLEN.
HOW THE DARKNESS HAD NEARLY CONSUMED US.
CLAK CLAK CLAK
BUT THAT WASN'T THE END OF OUR STORY.
THERE HE IS! MORNING, BRIAN--
HAIL HYDRA


SORRY ABOUT THE NOISE. HARRIS COULD ONLY GET THE LADDER 'TIL NOON.
MS. PETERS? WHAT--WHAT IS ALL THIS?
OH, JUST A LITTLE EXTRA CREDIT WORK FOR JASON'S CLASS...
...FOR THE ONES ACTUALLY DOING WHAT THEY'RE SUPPOSED TO--*MARCUS FESTERMAN!* SLOW DOWN!
BUT JASON--HE STOLE MY CAPTAIN AMERICA FIGURE!
YOU CAN *SHARE* IT! THESE KIDS--
THIS IS--YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO DO ALL THIS.
OH, YES WE DID, BRIAN.
YES WE DID.
BECAUSE IN THE END, WE FOUGHT BACK.
IN THE END, WE OVERCAME. WE LOST SO MUCH--
--BUT WE NEVER LOST HOPE.
THE END!

# SECRET EMPIRE

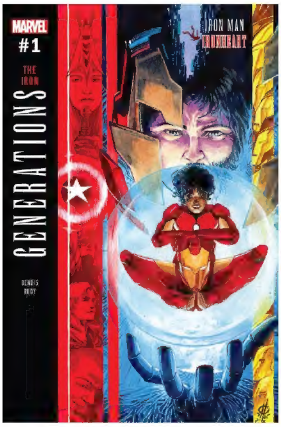
## NEXT


SECRET EMPIRE
OMEGA
#1

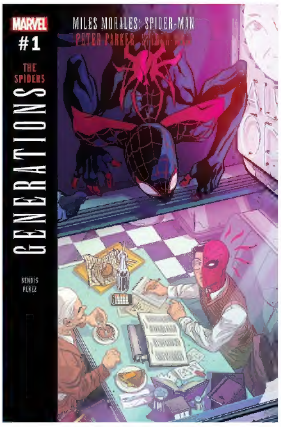
THE SECRET EMPIRE HAS FALLEN, BUT ITS GHOSTS REMAIN. CAN STEVE ROGERS--
AND THE WORLD--FIND A WAY TO MOVE FORWARD?

# GENERATIONS

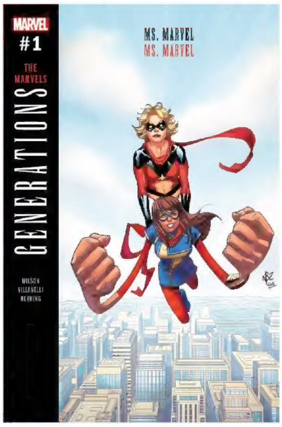
## THE VANISHING POINT


MARVEL
#1
THE IRON
GENERATIONS
IRON MAN
IRONHEART

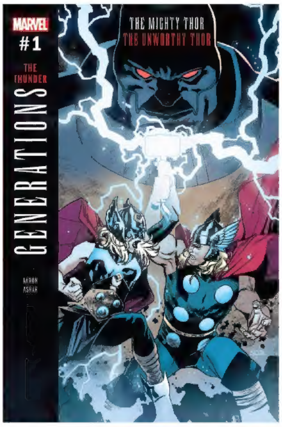
GENERATIONS: THE IRON #1


MARVEL
#1
THE SPIDERS
GENERATIONS
MILES MORALES: SPIDER-MAN
PETER PARKER: SPIDER-MAN

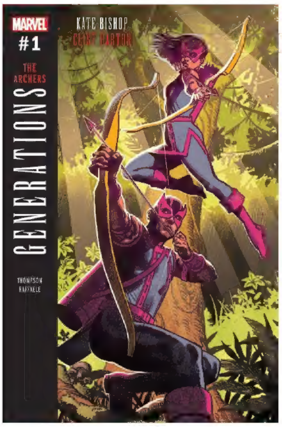
GENERATIONS: THE SPIDERS #1


MARVEL
#1
THE MARVELS
GENERATIONS
MS. MARVEL
MS. MARVEL

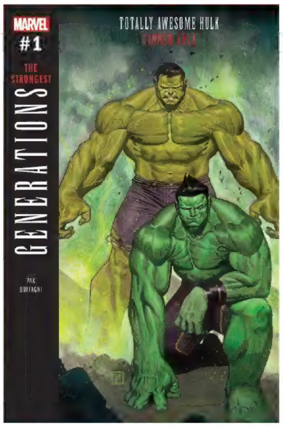
GENERATIONS: THE MARVELS #1


MARVEL
#1
THE THUNDER
GENERATIONS
THE MIGHTY THOR
THE UNWORTHY THOR

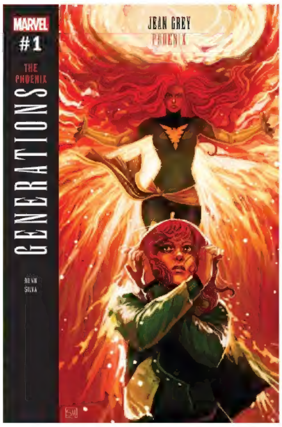
GENERATIONS: THE THUNDER #1


MARVEL
#1
THE ARCHERS
GENERATIONS
KATE BISHOP
CLINT BARTON

GENERATIONS: THE ARCHERS #1


MARVEL
#1
THE STRONGEST
GENERATIONS
TOTALLY AWESOME HULK

GENERATIONS: THE STRONGEST #1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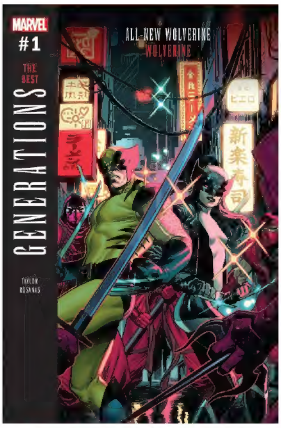
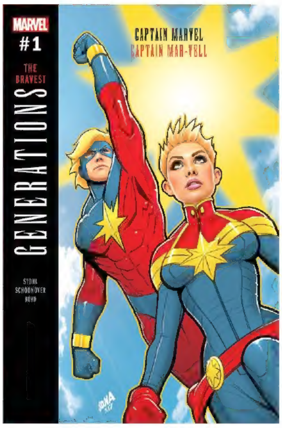
#1
THE PHOENIX
GENERATIONS
JEAN GREY
PHOENIX

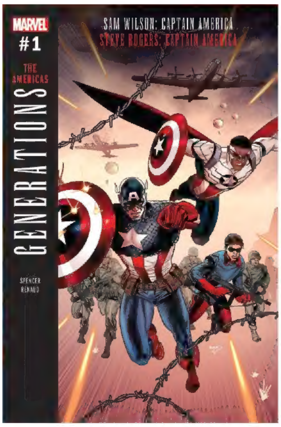
GENERATIONS: THE PHOENIX #1


MARVEL
#1
THE BEST
GENERATIONS
ALL-NEW WOLVERINE
WOLVERINE

GENERATIONS: THE BEST #1


MARVEL
#1
THE BRAVEST
GENERATIONS
CAPTAIN MARVEL
CAPTAIN MAR-VELL

GENERATIONS: THE BRAVEST #1


MARVEL
#1
THE AMERICAS
GENERATIONS
SAM WILSON: CAPTAIN AMERICA
STEVE ROGERS: CAPTAIN AMERICA

GENERATIONS: THE AMERICAS #1

THIS JOURNEY IS A GIFT...